Bengaluru Sunday, October 5, 2025 Pages 20 Vol 78 No 275 ₹8

DH on Sunday

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DECCAN HERALD
The Power of Good

Zubeen Garg poisoned, alleges arrested bandmate

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Gender *Page15*

Missing a beat

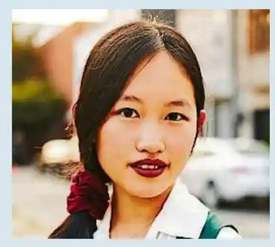
Sumana Chandrashekar, ghatam player and author, examines gender stereotypes in the world of Karnatik percussion

Art & Pursuits *Page17*

Masked appeal

From myth and medicine to satire and spirituality, each Sri Lankan mask carries centuries of cultural significance

Books *Page14*



Profound but puerile

Bestselling author R F Kuang's latest novel is a cleverly plotted fantasy, but the writing is uneven and overwrought

Food & Drink *Page16*

All about oil

Here's a handy guide to help you learn the benefits of different cooking oils, from olive to sunflower and cold-pressed varieties

Quickly

Hamas agrees to Trump's Gaza peace plan

Hamas and Israel have signaled a readiness to move forward with parts of US President Donald Trump's ceasefire plan, but significant gaps will need to be negotiated to bring an end to the war in the Gaza Strip. Both sides will engage in indirect talks in Cairo on Sunday and Monday to secure the release of hostages and detainees.
Details on Page 3

Socio-edu survey leaves DKS miffed

Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar was on Saturday irritated by the number of questions during the social and economic survey and he asked enumerators to "keep it simple". As part of the launch of the survey in the GBA area, Shivakumar and his wife were enumerated at their Sadashivanagar residence. It took almost an hour to complete the survey.
Details on Page 3

Cyclone churning up Arabian Sea

Cyclone Shakhti, the first cyclonic storm of the post-monsoon season in the Arabian Sea, is churning up the sea, packing a wind speed of 100 kmph. Shakhti, which has intensified into a severe cyclonic storm, lay centred about 420 km away from Dwarka in Gujarat. Under the influence of the cyclonic storm, sea conditions are likely to be rough to very rough along and off the Gujarat-North Maharashtra coast.

British PM to visit India next week

British Prime Minister Keir Starmer will undertake a two-day visit to India next week in his first trip to the country since he assumed charge of the top office in July last year. Starmer's visit to India from October 8 to 9 will provide a "valuable opportunity" to reaffirm the shared vision of India and the UK to build a forward-looking partnership, the MEA said on Saturday.
Details on Page 6

Waste grows, producer responsibility falls short

Fourteen years after introducing the EPR policy, India's recycling industry still depends on patchy systems, informal networks and changing regulations

SHREE D N
BENGALURU, DHNS

A pan-India soft drink brand reported a sale of Rs 20,008 crore last year and claimed an 88% PET bottle recycling rate. However, in Bengaluru, one of its biggest markets, there is no mechanism in place for collecting or buying back used bottles.

This is not an exception. Across brands in various sectors, packaging material and post-consumer waste are rarely collected unless they have significant monetary value.

Ghost recycling plants, fake certificates and poor auditing weaken the EPR system in India. In pic, staff of a solid waste management facility at work in Electronics City Industrial Township Authority in Bengaluru. DH FILE PHOTO/PUSHKAR V

INSIGHT

To address this accountability gap, the country introduced Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) in 2011, with an aim to make producers responsible for the scientific collection, recycling and disposal of their products after sale and consumption. However, implementation of this policy is still evolving even after 14 years.

EPR seeks to formalise recycling by introducing the 'polluter pays' principle. Since the cost of procuring, transporting and recycling waste often exceeds the value of the end product, EPR mandates that producers of various appliances, plastic packaging and tyres pay for responsible disposal.

To achieve this, producers can have direct tie-ups with recyclers for material recovery and documentation of waste produced and recycled. Another way of fulfilling this responsibility is through Producer Responsibility Organisations (PROs) that manage the process end-to-end. Producers can also use digital platforms that offer real-time traceability, recycler verification, and Central Pollution Control Board-compliant documentation. EPR credits are a way to cash in on this value chain, where those who are engaged in the service are rewarded monetarily, and producers use them to prove compliance.

The EPR portal, launched in 2021, initially had loopholes that allowed many vendors from Gujarat, Maharashtra and Karnataka to generate fake certificates. The Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) has now fixed the problems. Dileep Kumar S, co-founder of Peenya-based 4R Recycling Private Limited, explained that some recyclers pay for the material collected from corporates. As a result, the focus is on materials that can yield high-value metals in the recovery process.

This also means that recyclers tend to exclude low-value e-waste like electric bulbs, which are particularly challenging to transport and recycle.

"EPR process channelises the materials away from the informal sector," says Abhishek Agashe, chief executive officer of Elima. This Hyderabad-based firm acts as both an e-waste recycler and a producer responsibility organisation for battery waste, tyres, and plastic waste.

"The quality of materials we produce from e-waste is higher, so is the cost. Formal recyclers incur higher costs due to mandatory certifications, processing infrastructure, audit mechanisms, labour welfare etc," explained Abhishek.

The informal sector avoids these costs, making the products cheaper but less accountable. "The EPR framework covers the cost gap between the formal and informal sectors," he explained.

Recykal, a cleantech startup in Hyderabad, runs a digital platform that enables digital audit with supporting documentation such as weighbridge slips, e-way bills and geo-tagged photos. "Brands can select the model that best aligns with their operational scale and compliance maturity, while ensuring traceability and audit readiness," said Ekta Narain, co-founder, Recykal. Abhishek says the EPR's objectives are sound, but its implementation is inconsistent and ineffective.

Implementation is also dependent on state pollution control boards. A company like Elima, which collects e-waste from across the country, must comply with the rules set by various state boards, which may not be uniform. For instance, some states insist on recycling by local operators, whereas central rules allow transboundary movement of waste for processing.

▸ EPR Ecosystem, Page 2

Stampedes, a symptom of governance failure

LT GEN SK SAINI (RETD)

At least 41 people were killed and over 50 sustained injuries on September 27 in a stampede during a political rally in Tamil Nadu. The tragedy has once again highlighted the country's recurring struggle with crowd safety, exposing persistent gaps in planning, management and accountability at mass gatherings. Despite repeated tragedies at religious congregations, political gatherings, sports events and festivals, basic lessons on safety and preparedness remain unheeded, leading to preventable loss of lives.

Earlier this year, a judicial commission investigating the stampede at the Royal Challengers Bengaluru (RCB) victory celebration in Bengaluru on June 4, found "gross negligence and dereliction of duty" by RCB, the Karnataka State Cricket Association, event organiser DNA Entertainment Networks Pvt Ltd, and Bengaluru Police. The commission's report said that authorities allowed the event to happen despite knowing that crowd management was impossible.

At the centre of crowd safety is The Police Act of 1861, which empowers senior police officers under Section 30 to regulate all public assemblies, grant or withhold permissions, and prevent potential breaches of peace. This Act has been modified and supplemented by state-specific laws to address the evolving needs. Consequently, the police and administrative authorities are responsible for regulating mass gatherings and ensuring public safety. It is imperative that they implement robust protocols to prevent any mishap. The police are trained to manage two primary types of crowds. The first one is spontaneous crowds that form in response to an immediate incident or trigger, such as protests, outbreak of violence or an accident. These situations demand rapid reaction as authorities have little to no advance preparation time.

Despite repeated tragedies, lessons on safety and preparedness remain unheeded, leading to loss of lives at mass gatherings. In pic, a portrait of actor-turned-politician Vijay lies near scattered footwear after a stampede broke out at his rally in Karur, Tamil Nadu, recently. AFP

The **SUNDAY STORY**

The other category involves planned congregations during religious festivals, processions, sports meets or political rallies. These are events where there is generally adequate forewarning. The information may come through intelligence reports, requests for permission or publicity material circulated by the organisers, increasingly, social media outreach. Fatalities in the second category of mass gatherings are largely avoidable as there is enough time to put in place necessary measures for their smooth conduct.

It is important to understand where organisers and police go wrong in anticipating and preventing accidents at mass gatherings. Such events bring together large numbers of people in unfamiliar settings and can lead to highly unpredictable situations as the infrastructure set up for them is often temporary and rarely adequate. These venues and roads leading to the venue are often not designed for processing large crowds. Sports events, which are generally held in fixed venues, are an exception.

However, cricket stadiums in Nagpur and Mohali were relocated to more open areas as the previous venues faced crowd management challenges due to urban growth around them.

▸ Crowd safety, Page 2

DH SPECIAL

CSR money flows to power centres, avoids backward regions

PAVAN KUMAR H
HUBBALLI, DHNS

Karnataka has collected a total of Rs 8,889 crore corporate social responsibility (CSR) funds over the past five financial years. Nearly 43% of the CSR funds has been channeled into the education sector, with a focus on school infrastructure development.

With 2,969 companies actively contributing CSR funds in the last five years, Karnataka ranks fifth in the country in CSR fund collection. The flow of CSR funds has increased from Rs 1,448 crore in 2019-20 to Rs 2,255 crore in 2023-24, a rise of 55.74%.

As per the Companies Act, 2013, companies are required to spend at least 2% of their average net profit from the three preceding financial years on any of the 24 development sectors listed in the Act.

Experts say companies typically invest in sectors that benefit local communities, bring them goodwill and provide visibility.

Education, healthcare, environmental sustainability, rural development and sports training have emerged as the priority sectors in the state. Sectors such as safe drinking water, senior citizen welfare, slum development, gender equality have received minimal funding. Abhishek Modi, senior engagement manager at Sattva, which analyses CSR fund utilisation across India, says there are visible improvements in education, health, rural development and skilling in the state through CSR funds.

"Though rules do not restrict companies geographically or sectorally, companies usually invest in areas where they operate or a place where their products are in demand," he said.

Data shows that nearly 60% of the CSR funds are used on physical infrastructure development.

Investment patterns also show stark regional disparities. For instance, two aspirational districts Raichur and Yadgir have received only Rs 59 cr and Rs 5 cr respectively, despite housing hazardous industries. In contrast, Mysuru (Rs 304 cr), Dakshina Kannada (Rs 250 cr) and Dharwad (Rs 155 cr) drew significantly more.

"Companies avoid investing in aspirational districts, either because they don't have direct business relevance or the community's needs don't align with their expertise," said a Bengaluru-based researcher.

Bengaluru Urban presents a curious case. The district received Rs 1,074 cr in 2021-22 and just Rs 2.98 cr in 2023-24.

Experts point to political influence in CSR allocations. Haveri, the home district of former chief minister Basavaraj Bommai, received Rs 27 crore between 2021 and 2023, a 12-fold jump from previous years. Mysuru, chief minister Siddaramaiah's home district, saw CSR investments rise from an average of Rs 25 crore annually earlier to Rs 200 crore in 2023-24, after he took office.

"Most companies do not specify the districts they fund. Also, there is little clarity on actual fund usage," said another expert, who recommended forming a committee with government officials, subject experts and company representatives as members to ensure transparency.

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भारत सरकार GOVERNMENT OF BHARAT

'Recycling sector needs green industry tag'

EPR Ecosystem, from P1

"If implementation is standardised across the states, it would help EPR businesses achieve better compliance," said Abhishek.

While CPCB has launched dedicated EPR portals for various categories, inconsistencies persist. Varying interpretations of rules by state pollution control boards, delays in approvals or registration renewals and poor digital coordination between CPCB and SPCBs on verification and field-level enforcement are some key challenges.

"Confusion surrounding the distinction between authorised credits and unverified documentation, as well as consumer waste collection obligations, hinder EPR's effective implementation," said Ekta.

Are producers meeting their targets honestly, or are loopholes being exploited? Ekta says there is a growing push for transparency, especially with the mandatory EPR portal reporting and the Environmental Compensation (EC) clause that specifies the monetary penalty imposed on producers, importers, or brand owners (PIBOs) who fail to meet their EPR obligations within a specified time.

While many leading brands are actively working towards achieving full compliance, there are still challenges in ground-level verification, and there have been instances where non-compliant recyclers were given duplicate credits.

"Fulfillments are sometimes done through unverified channels, and some smaller producers rely on proxy documentation without traceable material movement," she said.

Abhishek believes that there needs to be better compliance within the industry as well, and the culture of shortcuts must cease.

Frequent policy changes

EPR frameworks are evolving consistently. "In 2012, there were very few categories in e-waste. Now there are over 100," says Dileep Kumar. However, frequent policy changes create uncertainty.

The amendments in 2024 to India's e-waste rules under the E-Waste (Management) Rules, 2022, fixed a floor price of 22 per kg for general e-waste that producers must pay to recyclers to obtain EPR certificates.

Electronic majors, such as Samsung, LG and others, have challenged this in court, saying it inflates the costs. They argued that the government should allow the market to decide the price.

The case is pending in court, and the outcome will determine the course of e-waste EPR. "This has led to a funding gap in the market. The uncertainty has made recycling businesses freeze investments," said Abhishek.

"Frequent changes in the policy pose challenges in implementation. We need to have fixed frameworks for 4-5 years before changing, it helps the businesses invest in collection, transportation and processing systems," Abhishek pointed out.

CPCB's reported plan to privatise and auction EPR credits has also drawn criticism. "The lowest bidder gets the most amount of business. But EPR needs compliance. How do you build compliance into this auctioneering model?" Abhishek asks, suggesting that market-driven recycling could be a step back from the existing system.

India's textile industry will need EPR as the country's fast fashion boom is generating large quantities of textile waste, said Abhishek. Currently, cloth is often reused or upcycled, being handed down or given away to other people.

"Developing a supply chain and a market for the end products is critical at this stage," Abhishek observed.

EPR credits for households

In a 2022 compliance audit report, the CAG directed the CPCB and state PCBs to identify and register all PIBOs operating under their jurisdiction, to comply with the provisions of the EPR.

Kerala became one of the first states to implement EPR, while taking a step further by integrating households into the EPR chain. The state generates approximately 2.5 million tonnes of waste annually.

In 2024, the state launched door-to-door collection of e-waste and other solid waste, providing EPR credits to households. So far, Rs 8.84 lakh has been given to households through the Harita Karma Sena volunteers.

Clean Kerala Company works as the nodal agency for e-waste collection. Kerala State Pollution Control Board has been engaged in the process of registering all entities mandated under EPR and ensuring the compliance aspects of waste management.

Local self-government institutions are responsible for collecting and segregating waste at the ground level, while designated agencies are entrusted with recycling tasks.

The Kerala local self-government department brought out the Extended Producer Responsibility policy in July 2025. The key objectives are to give incentives to producers to reduce waste and to invest in recycling initiatives.

The state is yet to initiate aggressive enforcement, industry sources said. Activists in the field say that, due to a lack of effective monitoring systems, the PCB relies heavily on the data provided by the producers and PROs.

Ram Prasad V, a Bengaluru-based waste management consultant, says EPR credits should be given to households in Bengaluru as well. Bangalore Solid Waste Management Limited (BSWML), which collects the user fee, can award a portion of EPR credits to households in the form of a fee discount.

In fact, BSWML officials were also keen on this, but sources say registration on the CPCB portal took a backseat for reasons unknown. The fact that the garbage fee-collecting authority is the corporation and not the BSWML has only complicated the situation.

Karnataka Power Corporation Limited (KPCL) is in the process of registering as a plastic waste processor through its waste-to-energy plant in Bidadi.

Rajesh Babu, co-founder of Swachha, a non-profit focused on waste management, views the rise of producer responsibility organisations as a trend that can hinder urban local bodies (ULBs) from acting as PROs and generating revenue from it. "Only the municipality of Indore has been successful in doing this," he says, adding that there is no political will and intent among ULBs even when there is good potential to earn money and enforce responsibility.

What needs to be done?

The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) has mandated environment, social, and governance (ESG) reporting for 1,000 listed companies on the National Stock Exchange. Smitha Venkatesh, an independent ESG consultant, describes this as a progressive step as it involves the supply chains of micro, small and medium-sized industries.

"However, internal departments in most micro, small and medium enterprises are unaware of EPR guidelines and mandates. There needs to be a lot more awareness," she said.

Dileep Kumar highlighted an important aspect. "We recyclers do not have a sector. When we go to a bank and ask for loans, we fall under the category of traders, so we are unable to avail ourselves of any schemes and incentives meant for specific sectors. Naturally, we are charged higher interest rates," he said. He added that categorisation of the recycling industry as a green industry that contributes to the circular economy would help better implementation of EPR.

He added that there is no clarity on who should receive carbon credits for recycling—whether it should be the producer who pays for recycling, or the recycler who actually does it.

According to Thiruvananthapuram-based environmental activist K N Shibu, the key drawback of EPR implementation is that those associated with framing the policies and setting targets are generally senior bureaucrats of the Union government and corporate representatives. "There should be greater representation of states in the development of guidelines for EPR implementation," he said.

"We have seen promising traction where regulators are open to collaborating with technology platforms to enable standardised compliance. We believe that collaborative governance, where tech providers, regulators, and stakeholders work in sync, is key to building trust and scalability in India's EPR landscape," said Ekta.

(With inputs from S N V Sudhir in Hyderabad and Arjun Raghunath in Thiruvananthapuram)

Used oil EPR: Non-compliance or teething issues?

SHREE D N
BENGALURU, DHNS

Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) for newer categories, such as used oil and non-ferrous metals, is still evolving, with rules taking shape and infrastructure catching up.

EPR for used oil in India was formally introduced through the Second Amendment to the Hazardous and Other Wastes (Management and Transboundary Movement) Rules, 2023. Effective April 1, 2024, the framework brings producers, importers, and recyclers of lubricants and base oils under a mandatory system of accountability for the collection and recycling of used oil.

The EPR mechanism aims to address the long-standing issue of improper disposal of used lubricating oil, which poses significant environmental hazards when dumped, burned, or mixed with other waste. By mandating recovery through authorised recyclers, the framework seeks to ensure that used oil is re-refined or reprocessed in an environmentally sound manner, thereby reducing both pollution and dependence on virgin resources, and offering EPR certificates.

The Central Pollution Control Board's (CPCB) online platform, the EPR Used Oil Management Portal, tracks registration, reporting and compliance.

Under this system, every producer or importer of lubricant or base oil must register on the CPCB portal, declare the quantity of oil introduced into the market, and meet the annual recycling or recovery targets through verified recyclers. Recyclers, in turn, are required to obtain authorisation and issue EPR certificates equivalent to the amount of used oil processed. Producers can purchase these certificates to fulfil their compliance obligations.

Implementation of the used oil EPR framework is still in its initial phase. The CPCB has released detailed guidance documents, FAQs, and a digital adjustment module to facilitate registration and reporting. The portal's dashboard allows public viewing of aggregate data and progress.

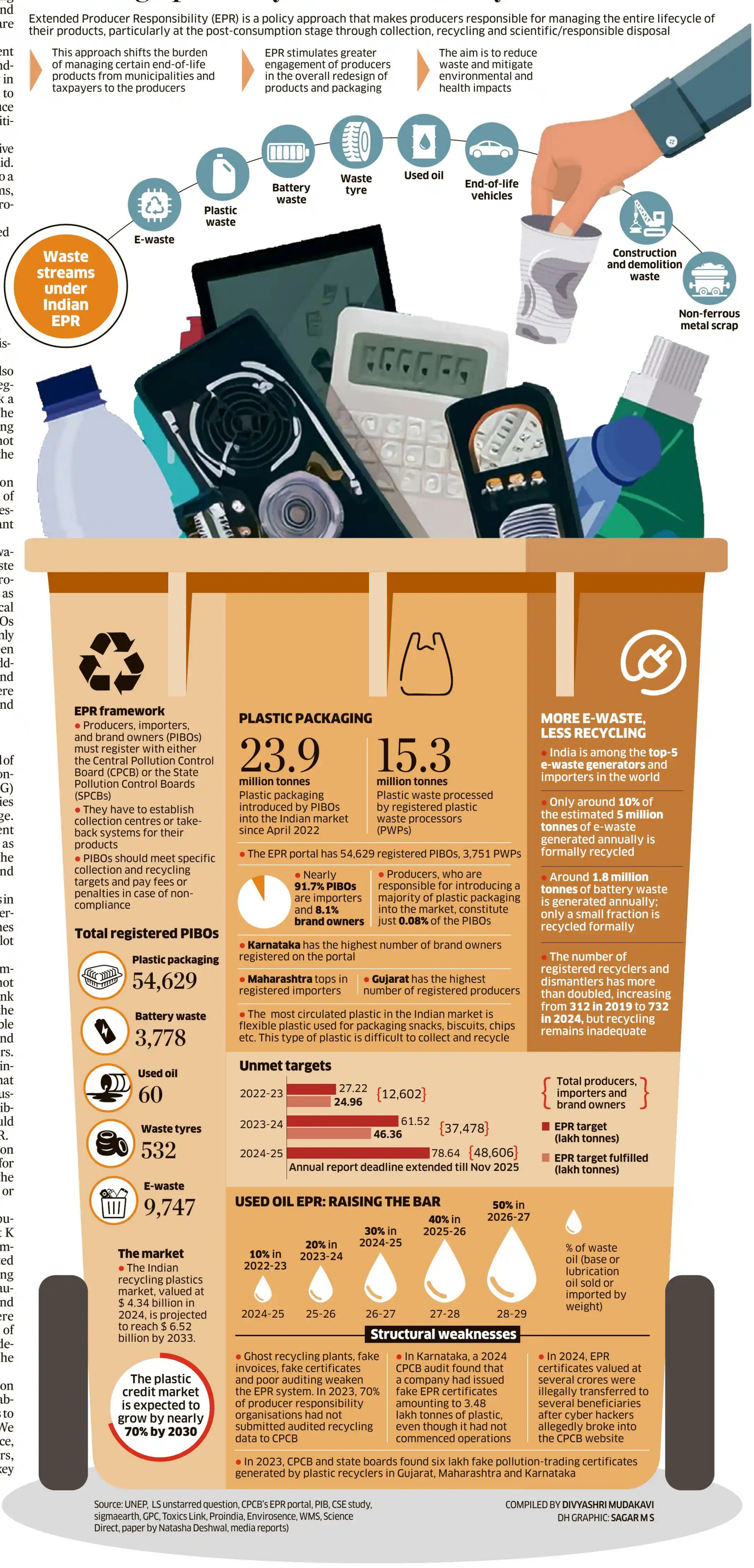
While major lubricant and oil-producing companies are expected to fall under this regime, publicly verifiable data show no registration of large private oil conglomerates. Public oil and gas business entities are registered.

If we take the example of Reliance Industries, its 2024 Business Responsibility and Sustainability Report (BRSR) shows no 'Used Oil' waste, even though many of its compliance reports indicate the existence of this waste category. The conglomerate and its subsidiaries are not yet listed on CPCB's ERP portal, except for Reliance BP Mobility Limited (Jio BP), which is involved in fuel retailing. The same is true for many other oil majors.

The rough pathway to sustainability

Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) is a policy approach that makes producers responsible for managing the entire lifecycle of their products, particularly at the post-consumption stage through collection, recycling and scientific/responsible disposal

- This approach shifts the burden of managing certain end-of-life products from municipalities and taxpayers to the producers
- EPR stimulates greater engagement of producers in the overall redesign of products and packaging
- The aim is to reduce waste and mitigate environmental and health impacts


Waste streams under Indian EPR
E-waste
Plastic waste
Battery waste
Waste tyre
Used oil
End-of-life vehicles
Construction and demolition waste
Non-ferrous metal scrap
EPR framework
• Producers, importers, and brand owners (PIBOs) must register with either the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) or the State Pollution Control Boards (SPCBs)
• They have to establish collection centres or take-back systems for their products
• PIBOs should meet specific collection and recycling targets and pay fees or penalties in case of non-compliance
Total registered PIBOs
Plastic packaging 54,629
Battery waste 3,778
Used oil 60
Waste tyres 532
E-waste 9,747
The market
• The Indian recycling plastics market, valued at $ 4.34 billion in 2024, is projected to reach $ 6.52 billion by 2033.
The plastic credit market is expected to grow by nearly 70% by 2030
PLASTIC PACKAGING
23.9 million tonnes
Plastic packaging introduced by PIBOs into the Indian market since April 2022
15.3 million tonnes
Plastic waste processed by registered plastic waste processors (PWPs)
• The EPR portal has 54,629 registered PIBOs, 3,751 PWPs
• Nearly 91.7% PIBOs are importers and 8.1% brand owners
• Producers, who are responsible for introducing a majority of plastic packaging into the market, constitute just 0.08% of the PIBOs
• Karnataka has the highest number of brand owners registered on the portal
• Maharashtra tops in registered importers
• Gujarat has the highest number of registered producers
• The most circulated plastic in the Indian market is flexible plastic used for packaging snacks, biscuits, chips etc. This type of plastic is difficult to collect and recycle
MORE E-WASTE, LESS RECYCLING
• India is among the top-5 e-waste generators and importers in the world
• Only around 10% of the estimated 5 million tonnes of e-waste generated annually is formally recycled
• Around 1.8 million tonnes of battery waste is generated annually; only a small fraction is recycled formally
• The number of registered recyclers and dismantlers has more than doubled, increasing from 312 in 2019 to 732 in 2024, but recycling remains inadequate
Unmet targets
2022-23 27.22 24.96 {12,602}
2023-24 61.52 46.36 {37,478}
2024-25 78.64 {48,606}
Annual report deadline extended till Nov 2025
Total producers, importers and brand owners
EPR target (lakh tonnes)
EPR target fulfilled (lakh tonnes)
USED OIL EPR: RAISING THE BAR
10% in 2022-23
20% in 2023-24
30% in 2024-25
40% in 2025-26
50% in 2026-27
2024-25 25-26 26-27 27-28 28-29
% of waste oil (base or lubrication oil sold or imported by weight)
Structural weaknesses
• Ghost recycling plants, fake invoices, fake certificates and poor auditing weaken the EPR system. In 2023, 70% of producer responsibility organisations had not submitted audited recycling data to CPCB
• In Karnataka, a 2024 CPCB audit found that a company had issued fake EPR certificates amounting to 3.48 lakh tonnes of plastic, even though it had not commenced operations
• In 2024, EPR certificates valued at several crores were illegally transferred to several beneficiaries after cyber hackers allegedly broke into the CPCB website
• In 2023, CPCB and state boards found six lakh fake pollution-trading certificates generated by plastic recyclers in Gujarat, Maharashtra and Karnataka

Source: UNEP, LS unstarred question, CPCB's EPR portal, PIB, CSE study, sigmaearth, GPC, Toxics Link, Proindia, Envirosence, WMS, Science Direct, paper by Natasha Deshwal, media reports)

COMPILED BY **DIVYASHRI MUDAKAVI**
DH GRAPHIC: **SAGAR M S**

Crowd safety, from Page 1

Enforceable crowd safety standards that prioritise prevention over reaction are the need of the hour

The police tend to look at every crowd or assembly through the lens of law and order, often overlooking safety planning. This approach disregards the distinction between crowd management and crowd control. While often used interchangeably, they require different tactics and operational plans.

Crowd management is a proactive process involving planning, venue assessment, regulating entry and exit, coordinating with stakeholders and ensuring the safe and orderly movement of people. Its purpose is to prevent incidents and ensure public safety. Crowd control, in contrast, is reactive, addressing emergencies and managing escalating situations through physical barriers, arrests, or dispersal, to restore order.

Prioritising law and order as a contingency rather than the main focus in peaceful events leads to far safer outcomes. Effective safety begins with sound venue design and structured crowd management. Risks arising from poor planning and organisation cannot be offset by operational response and afterthought once the crisis unfolds.

Stampedes in India are often triggered by a volatile combination of excessive numbers, inadequate exit routes, and failure to anticipate crowd surges, especially at religious gatherings which account for the majority of casualties. Planned regulation of crowds is critical to reducing the risk of stampedes.

Crowd accidents are not a recent phenomenon in the country: One of the first recorded tragedies occurred in 1820 in Haridwar Kumbh Mela, killing more than 400 pilgrims.

Two centuries later, poor communication, lack of crowd monitoring technology, undertrained personnel and the tendency to prioritise VIP movement over public safety all continue to amplify risks. Such misplaced priorities lead to congestion and panic. Alongside the threat of stampedes, authorities must also contend with security risks during large events, especially given the twin challenges of terrorism and a delicate communal environment, which heighten the risk of disorder.

To safeguard lives, proactive measures such as strict pre-registration of participants, real-time crowd data analysis using AI and drones, monitoring social media, and deployment of police and volunteers trained in crowd psychology should be taken at all mass events. Venue analysis must determine its carrying capacity, prioritise multiple entry and exit points, prevent bottlenecks, and maintain clear emergency lanes. Public education on safe crowd movement, frequent emergency drills, and coordinated control between local authorities and event organisers significantly reduce the risks of fatal surges.

Intelligence inputs, though often collected and analysed painstakingly, are frequently ignored or forgotten in the execution phase. Integrating technology, steadfast regulation and community involvement form the backbone of a robust crowd control regime.

The Ministry of Home Affairs has recently directed the Bureau of Police Research & Development to undertake an in-depth study of post-Independence protest movements with a special focus on the period after 1974. The effort is expected to map reasons, patterns, outcomes, behind-the-scenes actors and funding trails, leading to standard operating procedures (SOPs) to pre-empt mass agitations driven by vested interests. The mandate includes inter-agency coordination to trace protest-linked money flows, alongside parallel frameworks by central agencies to disrupt terror financing networks and tackle extremism-crime nexuses impacting public order and national security.

It is imperative that another study is undertaken to formulate detailed SOPs to regulate planned events where mass gatherings are expected, to ensure public safety. The lessons from recent tragedies are clear: India urgently needs comprehensive, enforceable crowd safety standards where prevention becomes the foundation for protecting lives, rather than relying on reactive policing once disaster has already struck.

(Lt Gen SK Saini is a former Vice Chief of Army Staff)

Gaza peace closer as Hamas agrees to Trump deal

Talks to start on Sunday in Cairo; gaps in statements of Hamas and Israel

CAIRO/JERUSALEM/ WASHINGTON, AGENCIES

Hamas and Israel have signaled a readiness to move forward with parts of US President Donald Trump's ceasefire plan, but significant gaps will need to be negotiated to bring an end to the war in the Gaza Strip.

Both sides will engage in indirect talks in Cairo on Sunday and Monday to secure the release of hostages and detainees.

Hamas has said that it will release all of its remaining hostages, a key part of the plan, but the group did not directly address many other parts of it.

In a statement released late Friday night, the militant outfit said it was ready to release the "war prisoners" as per the formula presented in Trump's proposal. "We also reaffirm our approval to entrust the administration of the Gaza Strip to an independent Palestinian administration (a technocratic authority) based on Palestinian national consensus and supported by Arab and Islamic backing," it said.

The Israeli government said on Saturday morning it was preparing for the "immediate implementation" of the first steps of Trump's proposal.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's office said Israel "will continue to work in full cooperation with the President and his team to end the war in accordance with the principles set out by Israel, which align with President Trump's vision".

Netanyahu, however, vowed to disarm Hamas, either through Trump's peace plan or by military means.

Trump hailed Hamas' response as evidence that the group's leaders "are ready for a lasting PEACE". In a social media post, he said Israel should "immediately stop the bombing of Gaza".

Two US envoys — Trump's son-in-law Jared Kushner and Steve Witkoff — are headed to Cairo, the White House said.

Israeli forces have been instructed to shift to a defensive posture, although they were not withdrawing from their positions in Gaza, said three Israeli officials.

Meanwhile, the head of Lebanon's Hezbollah said that Washington's plan was "full of dangers".

Trump's Gaza plan calls for the political end of Hamas, Page 8

A paramedic carries a stretcher in Gaza City on Saturday. REUTERS

Hamas response to Trump plan

Ready to entrust Gaza with independent Palestinian admin

- New admin should have Arab & Islamic backing
- Hamas will be an integral part of inclusive Palestinian national framework
- Future of Gaza Strip linked to national position, grounded in international laws
- No reference to disarming
- Indicates there is much more to negotiate

Israel to release Palestinian prisoners

250 life sentence prisoners

1,700 Gazans detained after Oct 7

For every Israeli hostage whose remains are released, Israel will release the remains of 15 deceased Gazans

Hostage situation

251 Total hostages captured on Oct 7, 2023

4 Hostages taken before Oct 7

148 Hostages released so far (8 were dead)

51 Bodies of hostages retrieved by Israel

8 Hostages rescued alive

48 Hostages still in captivity (around 20 believed to be dead)

4 Non-Israeli hostages in captivity

Bescom region fails to warm up to solar scheme

Applicants cite procedural delays, cost issues

DH SPECIAL

SNEHA RAMESH
BENGALURU, DHNS

The initial enthusiasm shown by applicants for the government's rooftop solar panel installation scheme is not translating into ground results as only around 7% of the 75,000 applications received by Bescom have resulted in installations, according to data obtained by *DH*.

Bescom officials said that while many residents applied for the PM Surya Ghar Yojana, only a few took interest in following it up. On the other hand, citizens complained of procedural delays, cumbersome processes and overheads, which made them lose interest in the process.

"I applied for the scheme and was then directed for vendor selection. However, vendors quoted exorbitant prices which were way higher than what I had estimated. They also said that they had to bribe the Bescom officials and hence the price was high. After speaking to some vendors I decided that it was not worth pursuing," said Vaishnav (name changed), a resident of RR Nagar.

Kochu Sankar, who runs a volunteer group called 'Citizens for green energy homes', said that many vendors misguided people and this was the only problem in the entire process. Usually a bill amounting to close to Rs 1 lakh deters many, he said.

While the payment process is clear, many applicants do not get an estimate of cost at the time of applying.

"There are close to 400 vendors empanelled by the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE). However, many of these vendors themselves are unaware of the process and many others try to take advantage of the applicants. Instead of building confidence among the applicants, they misguide them and sometimes quote heavy charges, driving people away from the scheme," he added.

The volunteer group has helped over 100 households install solar panels under the scheme and said that guidance and help with regard to vendor selection and talks with the vendor were crucial in ensuring better results.

The scheme provides up to Rs 30,000 subsidy for 1 kW installation, Rs 60,000 for 2 kW installations and maximum subsidy of Rs 78,000 for any installation over 2 kW.

Meanwhile, Bescom officials pointed at a lack of interest among people to know about the scheme completely.

▸ **Bescom, Page 4B**

Lukewarm response

District	Applications received	Number of installations
Bengaluru Urban	11,451	4,499
Bengaluru Rural	4,268	346
Chikkaballapur	10,788	25
Chitradurga	13,157	88
Davangere	13,788	168
Kolar	12,939	66
Ramanagara	597	23
Tumakuru	8,769	177
Total	75,757	5,392

Socio-edu survey: DKS fumes over 'too many questions', says 'keep it simple'

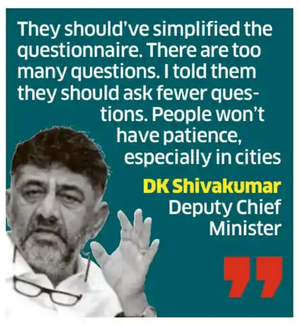
BENGALURU, DHNS: Deputy Chief Minister D K Shivakumar on Saturday had some advice for enumerators fanning out across Bengaluru to conduct the Social & Educational Survey: "keep it simple".

Shivakumar's suggestion came after he was irked by the sheer number of questions posed to him by enumerators at his home, some of which he refused to answer.

The Deputy CM launched the survey in the Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA) area on Saturday. As part of the launch, Shivakumar and his wife were surveyed at their residence. And it took almost an hour to complete the survey.

There are 60 questions and 20 sub-questions in the survey designed by the Karnataka State Commission for Backward Classes.

"They should've simplified the questionnaire," Shivakumar said after his enumeration. "There are too many questions. I told them they should ask fewer questions. People won't have patience, especially in cities."


They should've simplified the questionnaire. There are too many questions. I told them they should ask fewer questions. People won't have patience, especially in cities
DK Shivakumar
Deputy Chief Minister

"I refused to answer a few questions," Shivakumar said, asking officials to focus on capturing population figures. "Caste, educational qualification and whether or not a household has received government benefits. That's all that's necessary. There's no point in asking how many chicken, sheep and goat people are rearing, and how much gold they have," he said.

"What's important is to record how many members are there in a household. My mother is in her village. Two of my children are here and another is living elsewhere. You never asked me how many kids I have," he told his enumerator. "Population (figures) should be captured. That's what people are fighting for."

▸ **Survey, Page 4B**

Teachers angry over survey

Several teachers protested at the GBA office in Bengaluru's Malleswaram over problems relating to the survey work. Many teachers said they have been deputed 40-50 km away from their residence, which is causing them a lot of inconvenience.
Details on Page 4

Cough syrup deaths: After TN, Kerala & MP ban sale

KALYAN RAY
NEW DELHI, DHNS

A cough syrup sample tested in Tamil Nadu has been found to be contaminated with toxic diethylene glycol (DEG) beyond the permissible limits, Union Health Ministry sources said on Saturday, providing an update on children's deaths reportedly after consuming adulterated cough syrup.

Test results on 10 more drugs in Madhya Pradesh are expected in the next 24 hours.

At least 14 children – 11 in Madhya Pradesh and three in Rajasthan – died reportedly in the last one month after consuming adulterated medicines and three states – Kerala, Madhya Pradesh and Tamil Nadu – have banned the sales of Coldrif syrups. While Telangana issued a 'public alert - stop use notice' for the syrup, Uttarakhand raided medical stores and wholesale drug dealers.

The ministry has been investigating children's deaths due to alleged consumption of two different cough syrup formulations.

Sources said 19 medicine samples including Coldrif cough syrup, Nextil antibiotics, painkillers, and antipyretic drugs were picked up by the authorities from Chhindwara district for testing.

All these drugs were taken by the children who died.

Of them, nine samples – six tested by the Central Drug Standards Control Organisation and three by MP Food and Drugs Administration – have been found clean.

"For the rest of the samples, the results are expected by Sunday," sources said.

"On the request of the MP government, Tamil Nadu FDA had taken samples of Coldrif cough syrup from the manufacturing premises of Sresan Pharma in Kanchipuram. The test results were shared with the Union Health Ministry. The samples are found to contain DEG beyond the permissible limit," the Union Health Ministry said.

DEG, a toxic solvent used in industrial products, has been linked to fatal poisoning in several countries.

▸ **Cough syrup, Page 4B**

TOXIC TONIC

- Cough syrup sample tested in Tamil Nadu contaminated with toxic DEG
- Test results on 10 more drugs in Madhya Pradesh expected in 24 hours
- Risk-based inspections initiated at manufacturing premises of all 19 drugs sampled
- Rajasthan government suspends the state drugs controller

Firm accused of promising jobs in Canada, cheating aspirants

PRAJWAL D'SOUZA
BENGALURU, DHNS

A Bengaluru-based private firm is under the police scanner for allegedly cheating job seekers by promising visa services and jobs in Canada.

The Puttenahalli police registered the first FIR on September 22 against Owlspriority India Pvt Ltd, on a complaint by Chandan (25), one of the cheated job aspirants. The company claims in its advertisements that it is a Canadian immigration firm with offices in Vancouver and Bengaluru and has a full-fledged website pretending to be genuine.

Chandan told the police that he first came across the firm in January 2023 through an advertisement on social media, where it was claimed that they would help those seeking jobs in Canada, including visa formalities. Interested, Chandan registered on the website.

Moments later, a person identifying himself as Vinay Kotari, an executive with the firm, contacted Chandan and sought Rs 1,500 for an eligibility test. He paid the sum.

On January 28, 2023, Chandan visited the firm's office in JP Nagar and met Kotari. Chandan was promised he would "receive all the help to secure a permanent visa from the Canadian government and a job there", the FIR noted. Chandan was told that the service would cost him Rs 1 lakh.

▸ **Canada, Page 4B**

IN DISTRESS

Patients with their family members in a waterlogged ward of a hospital after heavy rainfall in Gopalganj in Bihar on Saturday. PTI

Energy minister's OSD held for bribery

BENGALURU, DHNS: The Lokayukta police arrested two people, including an Officer on Special Duty (OSD) to Energy Minister K J George for taking a bribe.

The arrested are Jyothi Prakash (50), executive engineer KPTCL and OSD to Energy Minister and Naveen M (34), an outsourced car driver, the Lokayukta police said.

The two had demanded Rs 1 lakh from the complainant to issue no objection certificate to DR Developers for sanctioning electricity. They were arrested while accepting Rs 50,000 bribe. A case was registered under the Prevention of Corruption Act and further probe is on.

V Shantaram's wife Sandhya dead

MUMBAI, DHNS: Legendary filmmaker late V Shantaram's wife and actor Sandhya Shantaram — who had essayed an array of roles in several films including the iconic 'Do Aankhen Barah Haath', 'Jhanak Jhanak Payal Baaje' and 'Pinjara'— passed away in Mumbai on Saturday. The award-winning Sandhya, as she was popularly known, had acted in several Hindi and Marathi films - and was known for her acting and dancing skills.

AUSTRALIA TOUR

Rohit loses ODI captaincy to Gill as Team India enters new era

SIDNEY KIRAN
AHMEDABAD, DHNS

The winds of change have swept through Indian cricket once again. The ODI baton, held by Rohit Sharma from December 2021, has been passed onto the young Shubman Gill. With the BCCI and selectors aligning their long-term vision around the 26-year-old, the Punjabi is officially the face of India's next generation, entrusted with leading the ODI side into a new era.

Truth be told, Gill's elevation was inevitable. Having already captained the Test side against England earlier this summer and served as Suryakumar Yadav's deputy in T20Is during the Asia Cup, the final step arrived rather swiftly. Rohit, now 38 and nearing the end of his glittering career, has made way for the next in line. Virat Kohli remains in the mix for now, but the signs are unmistakable - Indian cricket's next generation is taking over.

Gill's first assignment as ODI skipper is the three-match series against Australia starting October 19 in Perth.

The change extends beyond leadership. Ravindra Jadeja's omission signals another quiet but significant transition, with Washington Sundar and Axar Patel emerging as the preferred spin all-rounders. These tough calls make it clear: the selectors' focus is firmly on building for the future, even as India eye the immediate goal of defending the T20 World Cup at home next year.

"It's practically impossible to have three captains across formats," said chairman of selectors Ajit Agarkar. "At some stage, you have got to start planning for where the next World Cup is. ODI cricket is played less now, so giving the next guy enough time to settle in becomes crucial."

Agarkar conceded the decision to move on from Rohit wasn't easy, especially after he led India to the Champions Trophy win and the 2023 World Cup final. "Even if we hadn't won the Champions Trophy, it would've been tough," he noted. "But you've got to look at the bigger picture. Where the team stands, what's coming next and what's best for Indian cricket."

Shubman Gill

Rohit Sharma

Ravindra Jadeja

THE SQUADS

ODIs: Shubman Gill (captain), Rohit Sharma, Virat Kohli, Shreyas Iyer (vice-captain), Axar Patel, K L Rahul (wk), Nitish Kumar Reddy, Washington Sundar, Kuldeep Yadav, Harshit Rana, Mohammed Siraj, Arshdeep Singh, Prasidh Krishna, Dhruv Jurel (wk), Yashasvi Jaiswal.

T20Is: Suryakumar Yadav (capt), Abhishek Sharma, Shubman Gill (vice-captain), Tilak Varma, Nitish Kumar Reddy, Shivam Dube, Axar Patel, Jitesh Sharma (wk), Varun Chakravarthy, Jasprit Bumrah, Arshdeep Singh, Kuldeep Yadav, Harshit Rana, Sanju Samson (wk), Rinku Singh, Washington Sundar.

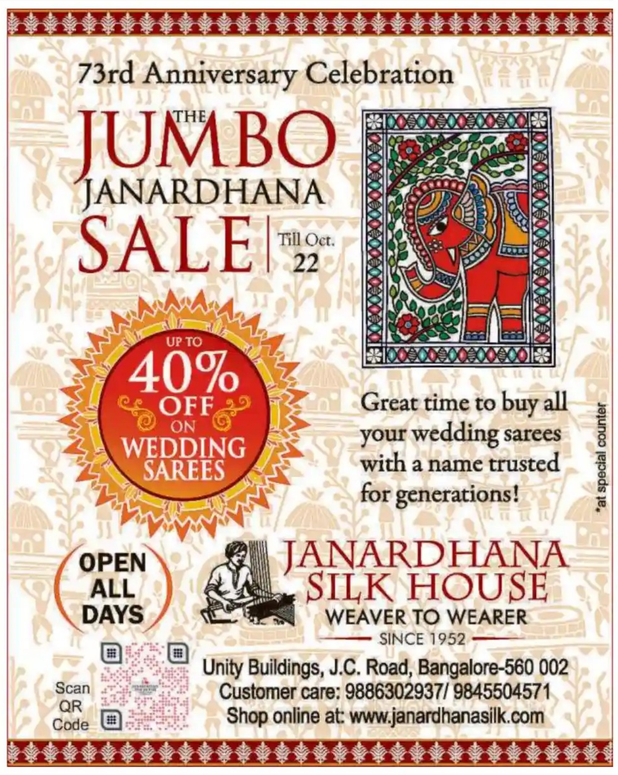
Telugu student shot dead in US

HYDERABAD, DHNS: A Telugu student was shot dead by an unidentified assailant at a gas station in the United States late on Friday.

The victim, 28-year-old Pole Chandrasekhar, hailed from LB Nagar in Hyderabad and had moved to the US in 2023 to pursue his master's degree at the University of North Texas.

After recently completing his studies, Chandrasekhar was reportedly working part-time at a gas station in Denton to support himself while seeking full-time employment.

Details on Page 7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NOVELTY IN NOTORIETY More & more youngsters do drugs & it's now just a call away

Cops ready to cope with every new subterfuge in dope trade

SHRADDHA A K & VENKATESH R
BENGALURU, DHNS

LSD, Ecstasy, Marijuana and Methamphetamine (Meth) in Bengaluru? Procuring these banned party drugs is not difficult. One should just know the right numbers to dial.

Two *DH* reporters managed to track down LSD and Marijuana sellers with just a call. They were offered 50 gm of high-quality Marijuana for Rs 3,500 and a four mm piece of LSD paper for Rs 1,700, but they backed out.

Marijuana, LSD, Methamphetamine (Meth), and Ecstasy are not only the most popular substances, but also readily available through tight-knit networks of users and dealers. Though many in Bengaluru still perceive drug use as a taboo, it is being openly embraced by an increasing number of youngsters.

Ecstacy pills seized by the CCB recently. It was smuggled in by a Congo national, who was deported since he is a first-time offender.

Secretive, tiered system

A senior police officer with Central Crime Branch (CCB) told *DH* that the entire system was built on secrecy, tiered distribution and rapid adaptation.

These networks rely heavily on messaging apps like Telegram. Buyers are guided to 'drop locations' where cash and contraband are exchanged without face-to-face contact. Payments are routed through UPI or digital wallets. Yet, even when transactions are traced, investigators often find a third party unconnected to trade.

Between 2023 and September 2025, Bengaluru police filed 1,560 NDPS cases against peddlers, seizing over 8.8 tonnes of ganja, 246 kg of synthetic drugs and more than 20,000 tablets of drugs ranging from MDMA to LSD. Nearly 7,000 individuals were detained in the same period, including 194 foreign nationals, with Nigerians topping the list. In total, the value of seizures exceeded Rs 2,500 crore, cementing Bengaluru's role as a major hub in south Indian narcotics market. The CCB officers have even raided big parties at five star hotels and bust drug rackets.

"Nigerians are sent here only for drugs trade. They discard passports and rely on cryptocurrency," the officer said. Nigerians accounted for one in three foreign arrests in 2023 and continue to be prominent in 2025.

The scale has only meant that cartels are using novel ways in their business.

Officers have intercepted LSD-laced chocolates and 'bhaang golis' near colleges, Tylenol tablets sold as highs and hydroponic cannabis cultivated inside city apartments. Inspired by international cases like that of rapper 'Diddy', Pink Cocaine briefly appeared in Bengaluru but quickly lost popularity due to high cost and overdose risks. Packages disguised as pet food, shipped from Thailand or Europe, have been found to contain hydroponic ganja. Post offices and sniffer dogs now form a crucial line of defence against the cartels.

Dealers switch between fake numbers, encrypted apps and even hold 'social media auctions' for drugs. Surveillance and human informants are essential tools. "Every time we close in, they find a new way," the officer said.

Consumption pattern

According to the officer, consumption patterns vary by age and class. Teenagers tend to experiment with vapes and nicotine products — illegal but widely sold near schools. In their 20s, these users move to marijuana, MDMA, ecstasy and LSD. Cocaine and mushrooms, priced as high as Rs 10,000 per gram, are the choice of the wealthy. "Adolescents take risks for the thrill. But once curiosity becomes dependency, they borrow, steal or even peddle themselves to sustain the habit," he explained.

Start as teens

DH reporters also spoke to users and peddlers and found that the availability and popularity of both synthetic and natural drugs have risen sharply. A majority of users and sellers are in their 20s, followed by those in late teens.

Nearly half (47%) of the users and sellers *DH* surveyed agreed that drug use often begins before 18. Strikingly, 60% of users were women and 40% men — a reversal of CCB data which suggests women usually sell rather than consume. While all those surveyed acknowledged the consequences of abuse, 66.7% had firsthand experiences with health, psychological or social fallout. All of them reported issues ranged from depression, addiction, aggression and behavioral changes to overdosing and instances of deaths and suicides.

"Most of the time, you see changes in communication skills. It really affects how regular users interact," one peddler said. "By 25 years, many suffer schizophrenic episodes".

City police commissioner Seemant Kumar Singh told *DH* that their approach to tackling the problem was based on zero tolerance. "We've strengthened enforcement and intelligence networks — from awareness drives that help information flow back to us to active monitoring on social media and the dark web," he said.

The police are targeting areas around colleges to identify non-students or suspicious activity.

"Naka bandis and vehicle checks continue to yield good leads. We've taken action against our own staff where needed," the commissioner said.

MANAS helpline

MANAS (Madak-Padarth Nished Asoochna Kendra) helpline - 1933 - was launched on July 18, 2024, to enable anonymous reporting of drug trafficking, illicit cultivation and related offences.

Hard road to recovery: Psychiatrist

Dr Divyashree K R, consultant psychiatrist, told DH, "Compared to earlier, MDMA, LSD and cocaine are now far more common. Cocaine, which was once rare, is now widely available," she said.

Addiction, she said, was not simply a matter of willpower, but a neuropsychiatric disorder, often rooted in genetics. "If you have a first-degree relative with dependence, your own risk is much higher. Dependence means tolerance — the brain asks for more".

"Nicotine, opioids and benzodiazepines are especially addictive. LSD and hallucinogens are less prone to create physical dependence, while inhalants used by children on the street can cause irreversible brain damage. Poor support systems, socioeconomic stress and impulsive personality traits make people vulnerable. Recovery is never straightforward. Dependence is relapsing and remitting, like diabetes or hypertension," the doctor said.

"Patients may stop, relapse and restart treatment several times before stability. Withdrawal symptoms often push people back. Replacement therapies such as benzodiazepines for alcohol detox or nicotine patches for smokers help ease withdrawal, but counselling is equally critical," she said.

Teachers on caste survey in B'luru face problems aplenty

Say their health and personal issues not considered

BENGALURU, DHNS

The teachers deputed for the Social and Educational Survey–caste census – in Bengaluru are grappling with multiple problems while conducting the exercise. While some complained about being tasked with surveying far-off areas, others pointed to persisting technical glitches on the app. On Saturday, teachers gathered in front of the Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA) office in Malleswaram to draw the civic body's attention to their problems.

Meanwhile, fear of suspension is compelling some teachers to brave poor health to participate in the survey. "I recently got a call informing me that I may have to face disciplinary action if I don't participate in the survey. I recently underwent a surgery to my right arm, and the doctors have advised rest. But I am worried that I will be suspended if I refuse to conduct the survey," a teacher who wished to remain anonymous told *DH*.

Another teacher who recently underwent open heart surgery was surprised at being called upon to conduct the survey. "GBA said it would exempt specially-abled and those in poor health, but our problems have not been taken into consideration," the teacher rued.

On the other hand, teachers are upset with being asked to survey places 40 km to 50 km away from their home. "I live in Sunkadakatte but they have asked me to conduct the survey in KR Puram. I have to leave early in the morning, and return home late in the night," said a female teacher, expressing concerns over her safety.

In his letter to Deputy Chief Minister D K Shivakumar, Congress MLC Puttanna drew the former's attention to the unscientific manner in which teachers were being assigned wards for the survey.

Few teachers also complained about the app either directing them to wrong locations or addresses not popping up when they entered UHID numbers.

Enumerators stage protest

Meanwhile, around 100 enumerators staged a sit-in at the Malleswaram municipal office in Bengaluru, alleging personal challenges, including caring for ailing family members and dealing with health complications. A woman reportedly brought her special child to the protest site to highlight why she could not participate in the exercise.

Deputy Chief Minister D K Shivakumar later met the agitators, most of whom are government teachers. "I appeal to the people to take part in the survey," he told reporters.

The state government is conducting the survey at an estimated cost of Rs 420 crore.

As N-K struggles with floods, B'luru gets 12% deficit rains

BENGALURU, DHNS: Though many districts of Karnataka are fighting floods, Bengaluru has received less than average rainfall this monsoon.

According to data with the India Meteorological department (IMD), Bengaluru has seen an overall deficit of at least 12%. While Bengaluru usually receives an average rainfall of 452.4 mm between June and September, this year, the city received only close to 396.5 mm average rainfall.

Senior scientists from IMD, Bengaluru, said that the weather systems and the wind pattern did not come up as expected and hence, Bengaluru saw a deficit of rainfall.

"The low pressure systems over west central Bay of Bengal moved over Andhra Pradesh and Odisha coasts. These systems did not bring rains to Bengaluru as expected," C S Patil, scientist with IMD Bengaluru, told *DH*.

However, the city is expected to get some good rains after October 15. Over the next week, city will only receive light to moderate rainfall at a few places.

"After October 15, the rainfall in Bengaluru might increase," Patil added.

KRS party workers booked for unauthorised protest

BENGALURU, DHNS: The Upparpet police have registered a case against office-bearers and over 60 workers of the Karnataka Rashtra Samithi (KRS) for conducting a protest march in Gandhinagar in violation of a High Court order that restricts all protests in Bengaluru to Freedom Park.

The protest took place on September 30, when around 60 to 70 KRS workers marched on 6th Cross and Second Main Road, raising slogans and obstructing public movement. This led to police intervention and arrests.

The issue began a day earlier, on September 29, when KRS Bengaluru West district president Amit Rebello sought permission to hold a peaceful protest at Freedom Park. The request was denied as two other protests had already been approved for the same date.

Despite this, police allege that party office-bearers went ahead with the protest, mobilising workers via WhatsApp, SMS, and other platforms. The act was seen as a deliberate defiance of both the court's ruling and police directives.

A case was registered at Upparpet police station, and the accused were arrested and later released on station bail.

Police further stated that after their release, the accused allegedly issued death threats to investigating officers and spread misinformation online.

ED attaches realty firm's property worth Rs 423.38 crore

BENGALURU, DHNS

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Saturday issued a provisional order attaching property worth Rs 423.38 crore in connection with a probe against defaulting realty firm Ozone Urbana Infra Developers Pvt Ltd and others.

ED launched the probe after multiple FIRs were registered at various police stations in Bengaluru city against the company and its promoters.

Further, a FIR was registered against the company and its promoter by the CBI, EO-I, New Delhi on the directions of the Supreme Court.

"The main allegation against the company is that it has defaulted in completion of construction of projection in time and failed to hand over possession to customers. It is alleged that the company induced gullible customers by offering to pay pre-construction EMIs till handing over the possession of the flats to homebuyers. However, it failed to honour its commitments and did not complete the project/flats," the agency said.

"The builder neither delivered possession of the residential units to homebuyers nor refunded their deposited amount and misappropriated the entire upfront booking amount/loan amount."

Earlier, ED, Bengaluru zonal office, conducted search operations at 10 premises of the company and seized various incriminating documents related to diversion and misappropriation of project fund from its various premises.

"During the course of ED investigation, it is revealed that M/s Ozone Urbana Infra Developers Pvt. Ltd. along with S Vasudevan (main promoter) have defrauded the home buyers to the tune of Rs. 927.22 crore and did not deliver possession of apartments/units against the said money, thereby dishonestly retaining and diverting the funds," the agency said.

"The accused diverted the funds to the other group entities and associated individuals including Vasudevan himself and his family members. Therefore, the company and Vasudevan have generated proceeds of crime to the tune of Rs. 927.22 crore and routed the same through various entities and used it for the purpose other than the funds actually meant for i.e. construction and development of projects in Ozone Urbana Infra Developers Pvt. Ltd," it added.

Man attempts suicide at Majestic metro station

BENGALURU, DHNS: A man allegedly attempted suicide by jumping in front of an approaching metro train at the Nadaprabhu Kempegowda station in Majestic on Saturday afternoon.

The man has been identified as Veeresh (aged 40 years), who works as a D group employee in Vidhana Soudha library. According to the police, he is out of danger and the reason for the suicide attempt is not yet known. The police have registered a case under 'attempt to suicide'.

Veeresh jumped off of platform 3 on the Green Line running between Madavara and Silk Institute at 3.17 pm. The on-ground BMRCL staff immediately turned off the power supply and ran to his rescue.

The passenger was rescued and moved to Victoria Hospital.

During this period, trains were operating only between Madavara to Rajajinagar and National College to Silk Institute metro stations on the Green line. Regular Metro operations on the green line resumed at 3.47 pm.

T J S George to be laid to rest with state honours today

BENGALURU, DHNS: The funeral of eminent journalist T J S George, who passed away on October 3, will he held with all state honours on Sunday, the Chief Minister's Office said on Saturday.

According to a government order, "T J S George, senior journalist and Padma Bhushan awardee, passed away on October 3. The government expresses its deep condolences and has ordered that his last rites be conducted with full state honours."

George passed away on Friday at a private hospital at the age of 97. His mortal remains will be kept at the Hebbal crematorium from 1.30 pm to 2.30 pm for his readers, family members, friends, students, and admirers to pay their last respects. The cremation will take place at 3 pm.

Ex-police officer booked for real estate cheating

BENGALURU, DHNS: The Nelamangala Town police have registered a case against a former police officer for allegedly cheating in a real estate transaction.

An FIR has been registered against Nanjundiah, who recently retired as a DySP.

According to the FIR registered on October 3, Nanjundiah has been accused of cheating T Mohan Kumar, a businessman. The FIR also names Nanjundiah's wife R Lavanya and one Hemanth Kumar.

It is alleged that Nanjundiah had acquired nine acres of land from the complainant on the pretext of developing, selling it and sharing the sale proceeds. However, he did not hold his end of the bargain, the FIR noted. Sources said that the suspect was questioned in connection with the case.

◆ IN THE CITY ◆

GENERAL

Basava Culture Campaign Closing Ceremony: CM Siddaramaiah, BS Yediyurappa, MB Patil participate; Lingayat Mathadhipathi Association, Gayatri Vihar, Palace Grounds, 10.30 am.

Inauguration of the renovated new administrative office: The Bangalore City Institute, Pampamahakavi Road, Chamarajpet, 6 pm.

Breast Cancer Awareness Talk: Dr C N Manjunath, Tejaswi Surya, Shivashri Skandaprasad to be present; Manipal Hospital, Kanakapura Road, 6.30 am.

Conference Ceremony: Shalini Rajneesh, Shobha G, BS Ragini Narayan to be present; BMS Women's College, Sports Complex, BMS Engineering College, Basavanagudi, 11 am.

RELIGIOUS

'Bhakti Bhavanandam' Akhand Bhajan: Sathya Sai Ashram, Kadugodi,9 am.

CULTURAL

'Nritya Neerajana' Dance Festival: Dance performance: Aditi Suresh, B Sameeksha, R Ankita, Tanvi Shetty; Narahalli Balasubrahmanya, Prashanth Martin Agera, Abhishek T to be present, Nritya Disha Trust, Kalagrama, Mallathahalli, 10.30 am.

Voice–BKF Pandit Mallikarjun Mansoor Hindustani Music Festival: Concerts, Bangalore Kidney Foundation, Bangalore Gayana Samaj, KR Road, 9.30 am.

'Shakuntale' play: Directed by Sushma SV; Vijayanagara Bimba, Hampinagar, 4 pm and 7 pm.

Invites to be published in this column should be sent to: **incitytoday@deccanherald.co.in.** Please note that hard copies will not be accepted

◆ CITY WEATHER ◆

FORECAST

Generally cloudy sky with one or two spells of rain or thundershowers

TEMPERATURES

Maximum	26.0°C
Minimum	21.4°C
Rainfall (as of 8:30 am)	--
Humidity (as of 5:30 pm)	60%
Sunset (Oct 5)	6:08 pm
Sunrise (Oct 6)	6:09 am
Moonrise	4:05 pm
Moonset	3:15 am

(Relevant data recorded at 5.30 pm) Source: IMD

IT raids on sub-registrar offices over discrepancies in property rates

BENGALURU, DHNS

Recent raids by Income Tax Department sleuths on three sub-registrar offices in Bengaluru found that there was a huge mismatch between the market value of properties and the actual price paid by the buyers.

The sub-registrars had reportedly failed to file the mandatory tax statement to Income Tax Department. They were reportedly attempting to keep these transactions from appearing on the department's radar.

In the aftermath of these raids, the Income Tax Department will issue notice to those who bought such properties at an undervalued price and ask them to pay the tax that they evaded during registration. According to information available from the Directorate of Intelligence, the Criminal Investigation wing of the Income Tax department , sub-registrar offices in Hebbal, Rajajinagar and BDA were raided.

"The team raided sub-registrar offices that had failed to report the high value transactions -- above Rs 30 lakh -- to the Income Tax Department. The team found a large number of transactions where there is a huge difference between the market value and the actual price paid. The difference between these two will attract income tax payable both by the seller as well as buyer," said an official from the department.

In one particular case, the market value for the purpose of stamp duty was Rs 78 lakh, but the price paid was Rs 20 lakh, the official added. " For Income Tax purposes, the difference amount of Rs 58 lakh is taxable as deemed income in the hands of seller and department will be issuing a notice to those who bought that property," the source added.

During the raid, it is learnt that the Income Tax team obtained 'Index 2' from Kaveri-2 portal generated for reporting period from 2021-22 to 2024-25, and will identify cases of tax evasion.

The Income Tax department had, in the past, written to the state government on several occasions, including letters to the chief secretary, highlighting failure on the part of sub registrars to report high value transactions. "Reporting becomes critical to ensure collection of income tax as it encourages voluntary compliance by taxpayers," said source.

"What action the state government takes against errant sub-registrars will be keenly watched," the official said.

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Pothole-ridden Dr Rajkumar Road turns death trap

Residents describe road condition as 'deadly'

ASHWIN B M
BENGALURU, DHNS

Residents and commuters navigating North Bengaluru are demanding immediate action to the perilous state of roads, particularly the 17th Main Road in Kurubarahalli, Mahalakshmipuram Pipeline Road, Dr Rajkumar Road in Prakash Nagar.

Anand C, a resident, said that the narrow Kurubarahalli road is so bad that a lorry was stuck in the slope for some time causing a jam.

For two-wheeler riders, the potholes have become portals to death, said a commuter Janardhan Kumar recounting the recent accident and described the roads as "deadly." He said that especially when it rains it's very difficult to control two-wheelers and navigate through these potholes. Potholes in slopes are deadly because while travelling down the road it's very difficult to control the vehicle, he said.

Auto driver Premkumar added that even the concrete stretch on Kurubarahalli 17th Main, which connects to the Outer Ring Road, has a "series of dangerously deep potholes."

Deep potholes dot Dr Rajkumar Road in Prakash Nagar.
DH PHOTO/ASHWIN B M

Shashikala R said "The government is collecting taxes but public infrastructure is still very poor. This is not Silicon City; this is Pothole City. What we ask is just good roads and better traffic management." Concerns were also raised about the road leading to the Mahalakshmi Layout MLA office, reported to be marred by both potholes and accumulated garbage.

Shivakumar, a retired PWD engineer, attributed the crisis to systemic failure. "Poor quality work is mainly due to a lack of proper foundation, poor quality of materials, and lack of proper planning. The road-laying technology is not used properly, and there is a lack of coordination between departments and lack of supervision."

Dr Vinay Kumar, consultant orthopaedics at a private hospital, notes that "Daily commuting on roads teeming with potholes doesn't just impact the back and neck; constant clutching and braking can lead to chronic wrist and shoulder pain as well."

He further adds that "previously, we mostly saw people in their 50s and above coming in with chronic back pain. But now, we're seeing patients as young as in their 20s and 30s due to travel conditions and road issues."

Govt orders taking over Kannada Sahitya Parishat, awaits High Court nod

Literary body hit by allegations of mismanagement

BENGALURU, DHNS

The government has decided to take over the affairs of the Kannada Sahitya Parishat (KSP), the state's premier literary body, by appointing an administrator in the wake of allegations of mismanagement.

However, the order appointing Kannada and Culture director Gayithri K M as the KSP administrator will come into effect only after the government gets a green signal from the High Court.

The High Court is hearing a writ petition filed by KSP seeking a stay on the September 15 notice issued by the government on appointing an administrator. The court is taking up the matter on October 14.

KSP president Mahesh Joshi, who was elected in 2021 for a five-year term, has been accused of overseeing financial irregularities.

As a precursor to appointing an administrator at KSP, the cooperation department is investigating allegations against Joshi, who has denied them.

The department is probing 17 counts of misconduct under Joshi's presidency. Of them, the inquiry officer received "partial" responses or explanations for only seven. In an interim report, the inquiry officer said the charges were serious, setting the stage for the appointment of an administrator. The KSP management has been accused of not cooperating with the inquiry despite multiple extensions.

The government is probing allegations over byelaw amendments that are supposed to help Joshi consolidate power, misappropriation of grants received from the government and so on. This includes failure to show utilisation of Rs 2.5 crore of government funds towards the 87th All India Kannada Sahitya Sammelana held in Mandya.

A final notice was issued to KSP on the administrator's appointment on September 17. Then, on September 22, the KSP secretary appeared before the inquiry officer and failed to provide satisfactory answers, according to the cooperation department's order.

When contacted, Joshi told *DH* that the KSP will apprise the High Court of all developments.

"I'm not the only person who makes decisions. There's collective responsibility. There are two committees - the finance committee and the executive committee - that approve all decisions," Joshi said.

Joshi said he had sought more time to provide information to the inquiry officer citing procedures under bylaws.

"There are motivated complaints against me," Joshi, a former additional director general at Doordarshan, said. "They say amendments to byelaws would make a dictator. The amendments were approved by cooperation department officials. So, they're investigating their own people," he said.

Skeleton found in building under construction

ASHWIN BM
BENGALURU, DHNS

The residents of Kothanur, northeast Bengaluru, were in for a shock on Saturday when the skeletal remains of a human body were found on the fourth floor of the Samruddhi apartments, a long-abandoned construction site located directly opposite a private engineering college.

The body, reduced to a skeleton and found in a small, filthy space, was first spotted on Friday evening by a labourer as construction work, which had been stalled for over 10 years, recently resumed.

When *DH* visited the spot on Saturday, a team from the Scene of Crime Officers (SOCO) were at the spot to conduct a preliminary examination. "After preliminary observation, the body seems to be of a man aged between 30 and 40 years. Crucially, there are no visible injuries to the body," a SOCO officer confirmed to *DH*. "We suspect it is a natural death, and the body had been lying in that under-construction building for over two years," he added.

According to a police officer close to the investigation, the deceased was found in a sleeping position, dressed in jeans and wearing three to four shirts. "A labourer who went to the first floor of the building on Friday evening was the first to see the body. He rushed down immediately and informed me," the construction supervisor told *DH*. "I also went and verified the presence of a dead body, which was lying in a small space. It had already decomposed. I then informed the police."

The news of the body brought a man from Anagalapura to the spot, fearing the skeleton might be his missing 63-year-old father. The police officer confirmed that "The SOCO team has visited the spot and taken the body. After their report comes, we will proceed with the investigation. Given the decomposed state, the police told the man from Anagalapura that there would be a requirement for a DNA test to confirm the identity."

High court, Consulate General of Israel receive hoax bomb threats

BENGALURU, DHNS: The Consulate General of Israel in Bengaluru and the Karnataka High Court recently received bomb threats via email, which were declared a hoax after thorough searches.

Although the FIRs were registered by the Halasuru and Vidhana Soudha police on September 22 and 19, respectively, the incident came to light on Saturday.

Both the Consulate General of Israel and the High Court received the email from cho_ramaswamy@hotmail.com on September 19. However, the Consulate General of Israel became aware of the email on September 22, the FIR noted.

"6 RDX IEDs Planted in Israeli Consulate Bengaluru, Blasts will Occur After Friday Islamic Prayers," the email sent to the consulate claimed, as per the FIR.

The same threat was made in the email sent to the office of the Registrar General of the Karnataka High Court. A thorough search was conducted on the premises, and the threats were declared a hoax. The police are investigating the separate FIRs, senior officers told *DH*.

The High Court had received four similar threats previously since June this year, which were all declared hoaxes. A senior officer told *DH* that they suspect the perpetrators use Virtual Private Networks (VPNs) to hide their location and mask their IP addresses.

Cops check 5,000 vehicles, seize 250

BENGALURU, DHNS: The city police conducted a massive area domination operation where the police patrolled specific areas by increasing their presence to curb antisocial activities.

They also set up numerous naka checkpoints across the city on the nights of October 3 and 4, deploying 1,000 officers and staff.

The intensive crackdown saw police personnel inspect over 5,000 vehicles. This swift action resulted in the seizure of 250 vehicles due to various rule violations and the lack of proper documentation.

In a significant move against crime, the police traced and recovered 11 stolen vehicles. Furthermore, 16 cases related to narcotics were registered.

The officers also cracked down on dangerous driving, filing cases against individuals driving under the influence of alcohol and those committing other serious traffic violations.

The police set up numerous naka checkpoints across the city on the nights of October 3 and 4, deploying 1,000 officers and staff.
DH FILE PHOTO

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Socio-edu survey: Miffed DKS complains about 'too many questions'

Survey, from Page 3

Shivakumar urged citizens to participate in the survey. "The High Court has said nobody should be forced to participate. People can say 'not applicable' to questions they don't want to answer. There should be sensitivity while doing the survey in Bengaluru," he said.

Providing information, Shivakumar said, would help the government provide justice to future generations. "You can participate online, too," he added.

GBA Special Commissioner Munish Moudgil, Backward Classes Welfare Secretary Thulasi Maddineni and other officials were present during Shivakumar's enumeration.

A total of 22,141 homes were surveyed in the city on Saturday, the GBA said.

Cough syrup deaths: After TN...

Cough syrup, from Page 3

It is not used for drug making and its adverse effects are known to the pharmaceutical industry. There have been at least five major cases of DEG poisoning in India since 1972. Risk-based inspections were initiated on Friday at the manufacturing premises of all the 19 drugs sampled, spread across six states - Himachal Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Madhya Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Gujarat and Maharashtra.

The exercise aims to find gaps leading to quality failure of drug samples and suggest process improvement to avoid such incidents in future.

Meanwhile, the Rajasthan government has suspended the state drugs controller and halted the distribution of medicines manufactured by Jaipur-based company Kaysons Pharma, whose dextromethorphan cough syrups are now under the scanner. The Medical and Health Department stopped the supply of all 19 medicines manufactured by Kaysons Pharma until further orders and suspended distribution of all other cough syrups containing dextromethorphan

Solar scheme gets tepid follow up in Bescom region

Bescom, From Page 1

"The scheme is called the PM Surya Ghar: Muft Bijli Yojana. People just see the word 'mufti' and assume that they get the installations for free and apply for the scheme without looking into the details. Hence, when they reach the vendor selection stage and realise that they have to pay up over Rs 1 lakh from their pocket, they are taken aback," a senior Bescom official said.

That apart, the Karnataka government's Gruha Jyothi scheme which provides free power to residential establishments has also impacted the programme.

"Many of them feel that such a huge investment when they are getting free power is a waste of resources. Hence, they drop out after getting to know the extent of investment," the Bescom official added.

Data showed that a large number of applications were received from districts other than Bengaluru. Many residents from Chitradurga, Kolar and Davanagere have applied for the scheme, but didn't follow it up, leading to poor implementation. For instance, in Kolar, where over 12,000 applications were received, only 66 of them have been converted into installations on ground. Similar is the case with many other districts.

Officials said that awareness among people outside Bengaluru on the modalities of the scheme was lower and many of them backed out as soon as they realised the scheme was not completely free.

Firm accused of promising jobs in Canada, cheating aspirants

Canada, from Page 3

The same day, Chandan transferred Rs 50,000 via UPI and the balance payment was made a month later. He also submitted his World Education Services (WES) and International English Language Testing System (IELTS) certificates for further processing and signed a Client Retainer Agreement, a copy of which he received via email.

Chandan told the police that he received regular updates after making the payments for a few months, and then everything stopped. He did not get any response when he visited the Bengaluru office, nor were the promises made in the agreement fulfilled, the FIR noted.

He alleged that the firm refused to return his money and that they had used fake emails under his name to open two profiles for the "Immigrate through Express Entry" option. When asked, no response was given.

"In the same way, several other people have been cheated of lakhs of rupees," Chandan was quoted as saying in the FIR.

The police have opened a criminal case against Ninan Lawrence, the director of the firm, and employees Vijaya Durga, Thota Akhil, Tabassum Naz, and Vinay Kotari.

More victims; probe expanded

A senior police officer said there were multiple victims. "A few of the identified victims are friends of the complainant."

A few other people also elaborated about being cheated by the company in their Google reviews. "Investigation is currently underway. The statements of other victims will be taken and will be included in the investigation," Lokesh B Jagalasar, Deputy Commissioner of Police (South), told *DH*.

State Bank Of India
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SHIFTING OF MADHAVANAGAR BRANCH (CODE NO.40196)

We are pleased to announce the shifting of our Madhavanagar Branch (40196) to a more convenient and spacious location with effect from **01.12.2025.** The new address is **No 2/1-1, First Floor, Southend Street, Behind Shivananda Stores, Kumarakrupa Road, Bangalore-560001.Our Telephone number is 8277898649.**

We also advise that locker services may be interrupted from **24.11.2025 to 30.11.2025,** due to transport and re-installation of the lockers at the new premises. If you intend to remove the contents of your locker, kindly do so at least 7 days before the date of shifting, to avoid last minute rush. Also, you have the option to change or close the facility. We look forward to serving you better from the new location.

Sd/- Regional Manager,
Regional Business Office-05, Administrative Office-2

S. E. RAILWAY – TENDER

e-Tender Notice No. E-DRM-Engg-ADRA -86-90-25, dated 27.09.2025. e-Tenders are invited by Divisional Railway Manager (Engg)/Adra, S.E.Railway for and on behalf of the President of India for the following works : **Sl. No. & Tender No.; Description of works; Tender value : (1) E-DRM-Engg-ADRA-86-25, Dtd. 27.09.2025;** Removal of existing seized corroded/broken rail screw, welding of slide chairs, removal of burr, fixing of guard rail etc. under Divisional Engineer (East)/Adra; ₹ 74,94,480.88. **(2) E-DRM-Engg-ADRA-87-25, Dtd. 27.09.2025;** Construction of Road under Bridge/Subway for elimination of Manned level crossings KA-29 at km 154/27-29 in between Salboni-Chandrakona Road in Adra division by box pushing method; ₹ 7,10,97,975.95. **(3) E-DRM-Engg-ADRA-88-25, Dtd. 27.09.2025;** Construction of Approach road, Shed, Drainage System and ancillary works at NHS No. BG-20 between Talgaria-Mahuda section in Adra Division; ₹ 7,58,84,175.66. **(4) E-DRM-Engg-ADRA-89-25, Dtd. 27.09.2025;** Removal of existing seized/corroded/broken rail screw, welding of slide chairs, removal of burr, fixing of guard rail etc. Divisional Engineer/North/Adra; ₹ 69,29,715.51. **(5) E-DRM-Engg-ADRA-90-25, Dtd. 27.09.2025;** Complete track renewal (Secondary) - 26.159 Tkm under the jurisdiction of Divisional Engineer (North)/Adra; ₹ 6,49,69,298.72. The **closing date and time of e-tenders** is on 29.10.2025 at 15.00 hrs. Details of above e-tenders may please be seen at website **www.ireps.gov.in** **(PR-681)**

WEST CENTRAL RAILWAY
Dy. CEE/Project/BPL. Branch
OPEN TENDER

The **Dy. CEE/Project/BPL, West Central Railway, Bhopal,** for and on behalf of the President of India, invites applications on prescribed tender form for the following works. **NIT No.:** BPL-ELP-OHE-T-2025-02, dtd. 03.10.2025. **Name of work with location: Design, supply, erection, testing and commissioning of Upgradation to electric traction system from 1 x 25 kV to 2 x 25 kV to meet 3000 MT loading target in Itarsi - Sukhisewaniyan section of BPL division West Central Railway. Cost of tender:** ₹ 1072558855.32. **Address of the office from where the tender form can be purchased:** Dy.CEE/Project/BPL. **Bid Security:** ₹ 5512800/-. **Completion Period:** 18 Months. **Date & Time for submission of tender (upto 15.00 Hrs. on):** 30.10.2025, 15.00 Hrs. **Opening of Technical Bids at venue:** 30.10.2025, 15.30 Hrs. Complete details of tender notice available on the Railway website **https://ireps.gov.in.** Complete tender form can be downloaded from above website.

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DPS Marg, Opp. Todapur Village,
New Delhi 110 012. Tel. No. 011-25841532

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The Cosmos Co-operative Bank requires premises on lease basis at Indira Nagar, Banasawadi, Electronic City for shifting of existing branch and to open new branch at **Chickpet, HSR Layout, Yelahanka, Bannerghatta Road. Expected area 1200 to 1500 Sq. Ft. (Carpet), ground floor, parking facility required.**

Interested parties should send their proposal in a sealed envelope to the address below by **10/10/2025.** It should be clearly mentioned on envelope "Regarding ---------- Premises"

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ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ : ಉನಸ: ಬಿ4:ಸಿಆರ್:2025–26 ದಿನಾಂಕ : 03.10.2025

ಟೆಂಡರು ಪ್ರಕಟಣೆ

2025–26ನೇ ಸಾಲಿನ ನೀರು ಸರಬರಾಜು ಮತ್ತು ಒಳಚರಂಡಿ ನಿಧಿಯಡಿ ಈ ಕೆಳಗಿನ ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಯನ್ನು ಗೊಳ್ಳಲು ಅರ್ಹ ಗುತ್ತಿಗೆದಾರರಿಂದ **Standard Bid Document K.W 3**ರ ನಿಯಮನಿಬಂಧನೆಗೊಳಪಟ್ಟು (ವೆಬ್‌ಸೈಟ್‌ನಲ್ಲಿ ಆಪ್‌ಲೋಡ್ ಮಾಡಿರುವಂತೆ) **e-procurement** ಮೂಲಕ ಟೆಂಡರುಗಳನ್ನು ಆಹ್ವಾನಿಸಲಾಗಿದೆ. ಹೆಚ್ಚಿನ ವಿವರಗಳನ್ನು ಕಚೇರಿ ವೇಳೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಸಂಬಂಧಿಸಿದವರಿಂದ ಮತ್ತು ವೆಬ್‌ಸೈಟ್ **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in** ನಿಂದ ಪಡೆದುಕೊಳ್ಳಬಹುದು.

1) ತುಂಬಿದ ಟೆಂಡರುಗಳನ್ನು ಸ್ವೀಕರಿಸುವ ಕೊನೆಯ ದಿನಾಂಕ: 17.10.2025 ಸಂಜೆ 5.00 ಗಂಟೆಗೆ

2) ಸ್ವೀಕರಿಸಲಾದ ಟೆಂಡರುಗಳ ತಾಂತ್ರಿಕ ಬಿಡ್ಡನ್ನು ತೆರೆಯುವ ದಿನಾಂಕ: 18.10.2025 ಸಂಜೆ 5.01 ಗಂಟೆಗೆ

3) ಅರ್ಥಿಕ ಬಿಡ್ಡು ತೆರೆಯುವ ದಿನಾಂಕ ಅರ್ಹ ಬಿಡ್ಡುದಾರರಿಗೆ ಪ್ರತ್ಯೇಕ ತಿಳಿಸಲಾಗುವುದು.

ಕ್ರ.ಸಂ.	ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಗಳ ವಿವರ	ಅಂದಾಜು ಮೊತ್ತ	ಇ.ಎಂ.ಡಿ.	ಕಾಮಗಾರಿ ಪೂರ್ತಿಗೊಳಿಸುವ ಅವಧಿ (ಮಳೆಗಾಲ ಹೊರತುಪಡಿಸಿ)
1	DMA/2025-26/OW/WORK_INDENT50043	9700000.00	145500.00	3 ತಿಂಗಳು
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ವಿಳಾಸ : ನಿಜಲಿಂಗಪ್ಪ ಕಾಲೋನಿ, ರಾಯಚೂರು–584101 ದೂರವಾಣಿ ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ : 08532–220322.

ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ: NO.Tech/DDS/DIS/e-proc/01/:2025-26. Date:03–10–2025.

ಸಂಕ್ಷಿಪ್ತ ಅಲ್ಪಾವಧಿ ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಪ್ರಕಟಣೆ

(https://Kppp.karnataka.gov.in ಪೋರ್ಟ್ ಮೂಲಕ)

ಈ ಮೂಲಕ ಸಾರ್ವಜನಿಕರ ಮಾಹಿತಿಗಾಗಿ ತಿಳಿಯಪಡಿಸುವುದೇನೆಂದರೆ 2025–26ನೇ ಸಾಲಿನಲ್ಲಿ ಜಿಲ್ಲಾ ಪಂಚಾಯತ್ ಯೋಜನೆಯಡಿ ರಾಯಚೂರು ಜಿಲ್ಲೆ ರೇಷ್ಮೆ ಇಲಾಖೆಯ ವ್ಯಾಪ್ತಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ರೇಷ್ಮೆ ಬೆಳೆಗಾರರಿಗೆ ಉಚಿತವಾಗಿ ವಿತರಿಸಲು ಸಾಮಾನ್ಯ/ಹಾಸಿಗೆ ಸೋಂಕುನಿವಾರಕಗಳು, ಬೇರುಕೊಳೆ ರೋಗನಿಯಂತ್ರಕಗಳು, ಸಸ್ಯ ಸಂವರ್ದಕಗಳು ಮತ್ತು ಗ್ರೇಡ್–1 ಬ್ಲೀಚಿಂಗ್ ಪೌಡರ್ ಊಜಿ ನಿಯಂತ್ರಕಗಳನ್ನು ಸರಬರಾಜು ಮಾಡಲು ಆಸಕ್ತ ಸರಬರಾಜುದಾರರು https://Kppp.karnataka.gov.in ಪೋರ್ಟ್ ಮೂಲಕ ಟೆಂಡರ್ ನಲ್ಲಿ ಭಾಗವಹಿಸಬಹುದಾಗಿದೆ. ಬಿಡ್ ಗಳನ್ನು ಸಲ್ಲಿಸಲು ದಿನಾಂಕ: 23/10/2025 ಸಂಜೆ: 4.00 ಗಂಟೆ ಕೊನೆಯ ದಿನ ಇದ್ದು ತಾಂತ್ರಿಕ ಬಿಡ್‌ಗಳನ್ನು ದಿನಾಂಕ:27/10/2025 ಸಂಜೆ: 11.30 ಗಂಟೆ ನಂತರ ತೆರೆಯಲಾಗುವುದು. ಯಶಸ್ವಿ ತಾಂತ್ರಿಕ ಬಿಡ್‌ಗಳಿಗೆ ಆರ್ಥಿಕ ಬಿಡ್‌ಗಳನ್ನು ದಿನಾಂಕ: 30/10/2025 ಬೆಳಿಗ್ಗೆ 11.30 ಗಂಟೆ ನಂತರ ತೆರೆಯಲಾಗುವುದು ಹೆಚ್ಚಿನ ಮಾಹಿತಿಗಾಗಿ https://Kppp.karnataka.gov.in ಪೋರ್ಟ್‌ನಲ್ಲಿ ಕಛೇರಿ ವೇಳೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಸಂಪರ್ಕಿಸಬಹುದು. ಅಥವಾ ಕಛೇರಿಯ ದೂರವಾಣಿ ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ : 08532–220322 ಗೆ ಸಂಪರ್ಕಿಸಬಹುದು.

ಸಹಿ/– ರೇಷ್ಮೆ ಕೃಷಿ ಉಪನಿರ್ದೇಶಕರು
ಜಿಲ್ಲಾ ಪಂಚಾಯತ್, ರಾಯಚೂರು

DIP/RCR/453/KSMC&A/454/2025-26

भारत सरकार
कारपोरेट कार्य मंत्रालय
त्वरित कॉर्पोरेट समापन प्रसंस्करण केंद्र (सी-पेस),
आई.आई.सी.ए. बिल्डिंग, 7वी मंज़िल,
प्लाट P-6,7,8, से.-5, आई.एम्.टी. मानेसर, गुडगाँव,
हरियाणा - 122050.
Email: roc.cpace@mca.gov.in

सत्यमेव जयते

Government of India
Ministry of Corporate Affairs
Centre for Processing Accelerated Corporate Exit (C-PACE)
IICA Building, 7th Floor,
Plot P-6,7,8, Sector-5, IMT Manesar,
Gurgaon, Haryana- 122050
Email: roc.cpace@mca.gov.in

FORM No. STK -6

PUBLIC NOTICE

[Pursuant to sub-section (2) and sub-section (4) of section 248 of the Companies Act, 2013 and rule 7 of the Companies (Removal of Names of Companies from the Register of Companies) Rules, 2016]

Public Notice: ROC/C-PACE/STK-2/248(2)/2025-26/1249 **Date:- 23/09/2025**

Reference:

In the matter of striking off or removal of names of **(74)** companies in the state of Karnataka under section 248 of the Companies Act, 2013 in respect of:

S No.	Work Item	CIN	Company Name
1	AB6280091	U80900KA2018PTC114826	EGGHEADS EDUCATION PRIVATE LIMITED
2	AB6188665	U65990KA2022PTC166849	DOWINN INVESTMENTS PRIVATE LIMITED
3	AB6683324	U02925KA1988PTC008863	SIDVIN MACHINERIES PRIVATE LIMITED
4	AB6311271	U74999KA2017OPC105068	AVIDVIS REGENTEK (OPC) PRIVATE LIMITED
5	AB6284316	U47219KA2024PTC192775	MUNCHMASTER ENTERPRISES PRIVATE LIMITED
6	AB6351391	U93090KA2020PTC139004	PUTTUR AYYAVARU MATRIMONY PRIVATE LIMITED
7	AB6527642	U72200KA2016PTC085071	RADID TECHNOLOGIES PRIVATE LIMITED
8	AB6562626	U47711KA2024PTC183341	WESTERIS INDIA PRIVATE LIMITED
9	AB6648209	U18209KA2021PTC152842	MSNK CLOTHING PRIVATE LIMITED
10	AB5823422	U72900KA2022PTC164843	KALIVERSE TECHNOLOGIES PRIVATE LIMITED
11	AB5818877	U62099KA2024PTC187845	CONSURVNET SOLUTIONS PRIVATE LIMITED
12	AB5789935	U62099KA2023PTC182246	ZYX MOBILITY PRIVATE LIMITED
13	AB5842681	U72900KA2017PTC104985	SECURELIFEVAULT TECHNOLOGIES PRIVATE LIMITED
14	AB5907611	U74999KA2020PTC136226	AVN RENEW ENERGY PRIVATE LIMITED
15	AB6108159	U01640KA2024PTC187136	KARUNADU SEEDS PRIVATE LIMITED
16	AB5895676	U75302KA2019FTC121417	RSIN FLEXIRENTALS PRIVATE LIMITED
17	AB5934253	U74999KA2018PTC119827	VOLADOR FLYTECH PRIVATE LIMITED
18	AB6255014	U72501KA2021FTC143417	QUERY.AI INDIA PRIVATE LIMITED
19	AB6309138	U47711KA2023PTC179351	HIH ECOMMERCE PRIVATE LIMITED
20	AB5938103	U74900KA2013PTC072650	WEBTRENDZ INDIA PRIVATE LIMITED
21	AB5919172	U58111KA2023PTC172250	OFFPAGE TECHNOLOGY PRIVATE LIMITED
22	AB5922445	U85500KA2024PTC184297	BLOOMSPORIUM PRIVATE LIMITED
23	AB5923604	U72900KA2021PTC150551	EMPOCRUIT INFOTECH PRIVATE LIMITED
24	AB5984050	U72900KA2018PTC116301	GIID INNOVATIONS PRIVATE LIMITED
25	AB6071407	U73100KA2022PTC165617	BACALT BIOTECH PRIVATE LIMITED
26	AB6003940	U74999KA2021PTC150211	ATOMIC TRANSFORMATIONS PRIVATE LIMITED
27	AB6034939	U72900KA2020PTC140748	PRAY IT TECHNOLOGIES PRIVATE LIMITED
28	AB6080114	U85110KA1993PTC013953	MILLENA RATTAN INTERIORS PRIVATE LIMITED
29	AB6018071	U74999KA2019PTC121067	YOUNGSPIRE INDIA VENTURES PRIVATE LIMITED
30	AB6007479	U74999KA2018OPC112809	TELEMACHUS INDIA (OPC) PRIVATE LIMITED
31	AB6067359	U22219KA2021PTC147850	WISQEY STUDIOS PRIVATE LIMITED
32	AB6191772	U62013KA2024PTC191996	TIGERND STRATEGY LABS PRIVATE LIMITED
33	AB6666201	U62090KA2024FTC193950	DSF LORE SOFTWARE PRIVATE LIMITED
34	AB6078695	U70109KA2020PTC132596	SUBHA INFRACON PRIVATE LIMITED
35	AB6125159	U72900KA2021PTC144175	DATA LEAP TECH PRIVATE LIMITED
36	AB6111871	U74999KA2019PTC120411	IMSTRONG HEALTH AND WELLNESS PRIVATE LIMITED
37	AB6132500	U01115KA1995PTC018083	WESTERN GHAT PLANTATIONS PRIVATE LIMITED
38	AB6122004	U15200KA2011PTC060388	ADITHYA COFFEE PRIVATE LIMITED
39	AB6208201	U33302KA1991PTC032440	HIRSCH BRACELET (INDIA) PRIVATE LIMITED
40	AB6341019	U52292KA2023OPC178834	SNAPNSHIP EKART (OPC) PRIVATE LIMITED
41	AB6167784	U45205KA2013PTC071621	360 DEGREE INFRASTRUCTURE PRIVATE LIMITED
42	AB6186022	U62011KA2023PTC176728	GITIM AI RESEARCH & SOLUTIONS PRIVATE LIMITED
43	AB6347512	U45209KA2020PTC132885	SATHYASHREE RK BUILDERS AND DEVELOPERS PRIVATE LIMITED
44	AB6224926	U74900KA2014PTC073489	DHIMINDS BUSINESS SERVICES PRIVATE LIMITED
45	AB6264147	U72900KA2021PTC143800	MATAI RISING SOLUTIONS PRIVATE LIMITED
46	AB6232029	U72200KA2022PTC168672	CONTENTS DYNAMICS PRIVATE LIMITED
47	AB6249239	U74900KA2015PTC081544	MEDSOUK HEALTH SOLUTIONS PRIVATE LIMITED
48	AB6260841	U73100KA2022PTC166752	INNOVUS LAB PRIVATE LIMITED
49	AB6274496	U74999KA2021PTC155168	SIGNATE CONSULTANCY PRIVATE LIMITED
50	AB6314501	U62099KA2023PTC172656	YEXAH VENTURES PRIVATE LIMITED
51	AB6283248	U45309KA2017PTC102075	BLUE ROBIN DEVELOPERS PRIVATE LIMITED
52	AB6314146	U72200KA2017FTC103733	APP PLATFORM INDIA PRIVATE LIMITED
53	AB6352044	U74130KA1998PTC023468	MASSE MARKETING PRIVATE LIMITED
54	AB5919880	U71100KA2023PTC176257	CLIMATE C LOGIS INDIA PRIVATE LIMITED
55	AB6365278	U72200KA2014PTC077880	NIRAYANA LABS PRIVATE LIMITED
56	AB6367475	U74999KA2021PTC152150	INSIGHTRIPPLE PRIVATE LIMITED
57	AB5328512	U72900KA2022PTC165103	YELLOW PAPER TECHNOLOGIES PRIVATE LIMITED
58	AB6434791	U92490 KA2021PTC149468	CNCPT MEDIA AND ENTERTAINMENT PRIVATE LIMITED
59	AB5898334	U74999KA2017PTC099368	NATIV TECH RETAIL PRIVATE LIMITED
60	AB6478172	U74999KA2019PTC130867	GOGAPPI PRIVATE LIMITED
61	AB6409370	U85110KA1997PTC021876	EMENCE COFFEE PRIVATE LIMITED
62	AB6446329	U80301KA2018PTC115933	CORTICULAR EDUCATION PRIVATE LIMITED
63	AB5837588	U67190KA2018PTC119708	FORTUNA EDGE FIN SERVE PRIVATE LIMITED
64	AB6465149	U40106KA2021PTC146435	DEVAGIRI POWER PRIVATE LIMITED
65	AB6498519	U72900KA2022PTC159450	XMETA TECHNOLOGY SOLUTIONS PRIVATE LIMITED
66	AB6531370	U74140KA2015PTC080219	FMXC MANAGEMENT CONSULTING PRIVATE LIMITED
67	AB6490033	U40106KA2022PTC166174	AERGRID ENERGY SYSTEMS PRIVATE LIMITED
68	AB6499496	U74999KA2018PTC109786	AVIOLIV TECHNOLOGIES PRIVATE LIMITED
69	AB6618583	U26109KA2024PTC185704	NEEL KRISHNA INNOVATIONS AND ENGINEERING PRIVATE LIMITED
70	AB6762412	U78300KA2023PTC179823	GROWINS INNOVATION PRIVATE LIMITED
71	AB6739083	U72200KA2016PTC086672	MIRAZTORTE ONLINE SERVICES PRIVATE LIMITED
72	AB6724608	U90000KA2013PTC070039	REAP BENEFIT ECO SOLUTIONS PRIVATE LIMITED
73	AB6867541	U85500KA2024PTC192222	BRELLA TECHNOLOGIES PRIVATE LIMITED
74	AB6902407	U52290KA2024PTC184165	SKK LOGISTICS INDIA PRIVATE LIMITED

2. Notice is hereby given that the Registrar of Companies had received applications from the above-mentioned companies under section 248(2) of the Companies Act, 2013 for removal of its/their name (s) from the register of companies either on the ground that they have failed to commence business within one year of their incorporation or on the ground that the company(ies) is/are not carrying on any business or operation for a period of two immediately preceding financial years and has/have not made any application (s) within such period for obtaining the status of a dormant company under section 455 of the Companies Act, 2013 or the company(ies) have obtained the status of dormant company/subscribers to the memorandum have not paid the subscription which they had undertaken to pay at the time of incorporation of a company and a declaration to this effect has not been filed within one hundred and eighty days of its incorporation under subsection (1) of section 10A/ have not been carrying on any business or operations, as revealed after the physical verification carried out under sub-section (9) of section 12, but it/they do not wish to continue its/their registration as companies and have, therefore, requested for removal/strike off of its/their names from the register of companies.
3. Accordingly, the Registrar of Companies proposes to remove or strike off the names of the above-mentioned companies from the Register of Companies.
4. Any person objecting to the proposed removal or striking off name of the companies from the register of companies may send his or her objection to the office address mentioned here above within thirty days from the date of publication of this notice.

Raunak Agrawal
Deputy Registrar
Centre for Processing Accelerated Corporate Exit

CBC 07123/11/0400/2526

URBAN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY, KALABURAGI
Beside Mini Vidhan Soudha, Station Main road, Kalaburagi-585102
Email:commissionergda@gmail.com/ Phone Number: 08472-239575

No: KUDA/CA ALLOT/Notification/2/2025-26 Date: 29-09-2025

:: PUBLIC NOTIFICATION ::

REGARDING THE LEASE ALLOTMENT OF CIVIC AMENITY (C.A.) SITES RESERVED FOR PUBLIC USE

A total of 113 Civic Amenity (C.A.) sites reserved in private layouts approved by the Kalaburagi Urban Development Authority (KUDA) will be allotted to various organizations under the Karnataka Urban Development Authorities (Allotment of Civic Amenity Sites) Rules, 1991. Government and semi-government departments, as well as various organizations interested in obtaining these sites on a 30-year lease basis, may apply for sites of different dimensions. Applications should be submitted in the prescribed format along with the required registration fee and initial deposit.

Sites will be allotted for purposes such as: Cultural activities, Religious institutions, Social organizations, Post offices, Banks, Fair price shops, Milk centers, Schools, Hospitals, Child care centers, Public libraries, Gyms, Recreation centers, Educational institutions, Police stations, Fire stations, Community halls, Central and State Government offices.

Application distribution and submission details:

1) Application distribution and submission location: **Kalaburagi Urban Development Authority Office, Kalaburagi**, 2) Application distribution dates: **From 30-09-2025 to 27-10-2025,** 3) Last date for submission of filled applications: **29-10-2025**

For more information regarding the location of CA sites, survey numbers, plot numbers, dimensions, and rates, please contact the authority office during working hours.

Sd/- Commissioner
Urban Development Authority Kalaburagi

DIPR/Kalaburagi/594/KSMC&A/2025-26

ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ನಗರ ನೀರು ಸರಬರಾಜು ಮತ್ತು ಒಳಚರಂಡಿ ಮಂಡಳಿ
ಕಾರ್ಯಪಾಲಕ ಅಭಿಯಂತರರ ಕಛೇರಿ
ಕನನೀಸ ಮತ್ತು ಒಚ ಮಂಡಳಿ, ವಿಭಾಗ, ಬಂದೀಗೌಡ ಬಡಾವಣೆ, ಮಂಡ್ಯ.
ದೂರವಾಣಿ : ಫ್ಯಾಕ್ಸ್ 08232–224816. e mail- kwbeemnd@gmail.com
ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ:–ಕಜಮ/ಕಾಅ/ಮಂಡ್ಯ/ತಾ.ಶಾ/ತಾ.ಸ/ಸ.ಅ/1013/2025–26 ದಿನಾಂಕ:03.10.2025

Corrigendum

ಕ್ರಮ ಸಂ	ಕೆ.ಪಿ.ಪಿ ಪೋರ್ಟಲ್ ಇಂಡೆಂಟ್ ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ	ವೇಳಾಪಟ್ಟಿ
1	KUWSDB/2025-26/WS/ WORK_INDENT393/CALL-2	(1) ಕೆ.ಪಿ.ಪಿ. ಪೋರ್ಟಲ್‌ನಲ್ಲಿ ಟೆಂಡರ್‌ಗಳನ್ನು ಸಲ್ಲಿಸಲು / ಅಪ್‌ಲೋಡ್ ಮಾಡಲು ಕೊನೆಯ ದಿನಾಂಕ ಮತ್ತು ಸಮಯ: **08.10.2025 ರ 17.30 ಗಂಟೆಯವರೆಗೆ.** (2) ಸದರಿ ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಯ ಟೆಂಡರ್‌ನ ತಾಂತ್ರಿಕ ಬಿಡ್ ತೆರೆಯುವ ದಿನಾಂಕ ಮತ್ತು ಸಮಯ : **10.10.2025 ರ 11.00 ಗಂಟೆಯ ನಂತರ** (3) ಸದರಿ ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಯ ಟೆಂಡರ್‌ನ ಆರ್ಥಿಕ ಬಿಡ್ ತೆರೆಯುವ ದಿನಾಂಕ ಮತ್ತು ಸಮಯ : 14.10.2025 ರ 11.00 ಗಂಟೆಯ ನಂತರ.
2	KUWSDB/2025-26/WS/ WORK_INDENT394/CALL-2	

ಹೆಚ್ಚಿನ ವಿವರಗಳಿಗೆ ಕಾರ್ಯಪಾಲಕ ಅಭಿಯಂತರವರು, ಮಂಡ್ಯ ವಿಭಾಗ ಮಂಡ್ಯ ರವರನ್ನು ಕಛೇರಿಯ ವೇಳೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಸಂಪರ್ಕಿಸಬಹುದು.

ಸಹಿ/–ಕಾರ್ಯಪಾಲಕ ಅಭಿಯಂತರರು,
ಕನನೀಸ ಮತ್ತು ಒಚ ಮಂಡಳಿ, ವಿಭಾಗ, ಮಂಡ್ಯ.

ವಾಸಾಸಂಇ/ಸನಿ–ಮಂ/ಕೆಎಸ್‌ಎಂಸಿಇ/469 'ಎ' ತಿದ್ದುಪಡಿ/2025–26

A HOST OF HITCHES Hire UGC-qualified ones among us, say lecturers

Quick fix to festering issue puts guest faculties in a fix

RASHMI BELUR
BENGALURU, DHNS

A file photo of a protest by the guest lecturers demanding that their services be regularised, in Bengaluru.

The guest faculties' issue in government degree colleges seems like it's never ending.

Though the government recently decided to continue them for the current semester, this is a 'temporary' arrangement and will not stand in court, say the guest faculties.

Previous governments too endured a series of protests by guest faculties, which affected academic activities severely.

Legal challenges

The thorn in the flesh is the conflict between the government's reliance on experienced, but non-UGC-qualified faculty and the High Court's recent orders to the government to strictly adhere to University Grants Commission (UGC) qualification norms for appointments.

This has led to uncertainty for over 5,500 guest faculties with decades of experience.

Despite the court asking the government to stick to UGC-prescribed regulations while appointing guest faculties, the latter issued an order to continue the services of guest faculties for the current semester and to submit the same to the court on October 8, during the next hearing.

Guest faculties are of the opinion that the court may not accept the government's submission.

"The decision to extend the services of guest faculties is contrary to the court orders. The court has clearly asked to appoint only those that fulfill UGC- prescribed qualifications. In case of non-availability of qualified candidates for some subjects, it can consider guest faculties only for such subjects. We don't think the court will accept the government order and we will again be in trouble," said an office bearer of the Karnataka state government degree college guest faculties' association.

The concept of guest faculties did not exist in the state till 2003, when the government withdrew the concept of 'part time' teachers and introduced 'guest faculties,' which means, they will be treated as 'guests' and given a job where there is workload and only for a period of 10 months with a fixed honorarium every month.

Even that was not an issue till 2006-07. When H D Kumaraswamy was chief minister, he sanctioned over 180 government degree colleges and this led to demand for guest faculties. Even now, a majority of the degree colleges depend on guest faculties.

Though recruitments were done thrice to fill vacant posts, it did not cater to the workload.

"Even though the government did recruitments in the past, the posts filled were a few thousands. Even after that over 11,000 guest faculties are working. We cannot say recruitments will resolve the issue," said Shivappa C, an office bearer of the association. The number of regular faculties in government-run degree colleges (numbering 430) is lower, at 6,500.

Some colleges run only with guest faculties. During BJP's tenure, the then higher education minister Dr C N Ashwath Narayan increased the honorarium based on experience and qualification of guest faculties.

The honorarium almost doubled. Until then, they were paid Rs 15,000 per month.

The BJP government had constituted a committee to submit recommendations to resolve the guest faculties' issues. It was headed by then additional chief secretary of the higher education department G Kumar Naik and comprised officials from the finance department. The report of the committee is not made public.

Guest faculties say they will be happy if the government notifies regular recruitment for all vacant posts and for vacancies created against retirement and by increasing the sanctioned posts.

"If that happens, a majority of the qualified guest faculties will enter the system and there will be no need to hire guest faculties. The problem is while issuing notification, the government only considers existing vacancies. If that is the case, the problem will never get resolved," said a member of the guest faculties' association.

It all started in 2018

The guest faculties were working with the government since 2003 and everything went well till 2018, when the UGC mandated that only candidates with specific qualifications (NET, KSET or PhD) could be appointed as guest faculties.

Even after this, the government continued to appoint guest faculties without prescribed qualifications. This triggered candidates who are eligible to get appointed, but not given opportunity as the government was giving points/weightage for the existing ones based on experience, leading to a legal battle.

Higher Education Minister Dr M C Sudhakar said, "If we stick to UGC norms, we will not have faculties for a few subjects as there are no candidates with UGC-prescribed qualifications to teach these subjects. We have informed this to the court also".

Belagavi locality tense moments after stone-pelting

BELAGAVI, DHNS: The communally sensitive Khadak Galli in the city witnessed tense moments following the stone-pelting incidents during the Urs procession of the Mehboob Subhani Dargah that passed through the Galli late Friday night. Residents of Khadak Galli raised objections to allowing the procession to pass through the locality. The situation escalated when a group of youths in the procession raised the slogan 'I Love Muhammad', leading to stone-pelting incidents.

Police personnel rushed to the area and brought the situation under control.

Tiger death in MM Hills: Probe team visits spot, suspect arrested

MYSURU, DHNS: An investigation team headed by Principal Chief Conservator of Forest Smitha Bijoor on Saturday visited the spot where a 12-year-old female tiger was found severed into three pieces near Pachchedoddi of Malai Mahadeshwara Hills division in Chamarajanagar district

During investigation, the team found blood stains at a ditch (halla) near the spot, where the remains of the tigress was found.

According to officials, it was old, with weakened canines. Hence it was mostly surviving on cattle. Postmortem report revealed no snare or gun shot. No body part was missing. It is suspected that it might have died a day before the carcass was found, due to poisoning, which is yet to be confirmed by an FSL report. The suspect has been identified and his house has been identified by a dog squad of Bandipur Tiger Reserve. He has been arrested. Manoranjan Tripati, Ravishankar, and Ramesh Kumar were part of the team. DCF MM Hills wildlife division Bhaskar joined them.

Meanwhile, Forest Minister Eshwar Khandre held an emergency meeting with the officials of all tiger reserves and of Mysuru circle, via video conference. He told them that even as the Wild Life Board has already approved to declare MM Hills as a tiger reserve, officials should hold a meeting with local people and submit a report soon.

'Dollu' adjudged best film in revised film awards list for 2021

BENGALURU, DHNS

Highlights

- **'Dollu' declared** best film; '777 Charlie' bagged multiple honours including second best film, best screenplay, cinematography, music direction and supporting actor. 'Bheemasena Nala Maharaja' followed with third best film and best supporting actress awards.
- **'Love Mocktail 2':** Best director award for S Krishna and best lyricist award for Yogaraj Bhat.
- **'Kantara' was** recognised for best background score and won the best female playback singer award. 'Koli Taal' (Chicken Curry) won best regional film and best child actor (female) awards.
- **'Balloon' is best** children's film, 'Yarada Mane' adjudged best social concern film, 'Love You Rachchu' gets award for best story and 'Sapta Sagaradaache Ello' for best dialogue writing.
- **Dhananjaya was** named best villain for 'Head Bush'.
- **Cinematographer Ashok** Kashyap received Lifetime Achievement award.

The government has announced a revised list of winners for the 2021 State Film Awards, following a review of objections raised regarding the earlier selections.

The updated list, issued by the Department of Information and Public Relations, cancels the previous awards and names the new recipients based on the recommendations of a three-member expert committee assigned to examine the complaints.

A total of 25 categories have been recognized in the revised list. 'Dollu,' produced by Pavan Wadeyar, has been adjudged the best film, while '777 Charlie' received the award for second best film. 'Bheemasena Nala Maharaja' was declared third best. S Krishna won best director award for 'Love Mocktail 2,' and Duniya Vijay received best debut director award for 'Salaga'.

P Ravishankar and Tara were adjudged best supporting actor and best supporting actress, respectively.

In the music categories, Charan Raj was declared best music director for '777 Charlie,' Ajaneesh Loknath won best background score award for 'Kantara,' and Vijay Prakash and Ananya Bhat were recognized as best male and female playback singers, respectively.

Each award carries a cash prize along with a medal: Rs 2 lakh and a gold medal for the best film and lifetime achievement categories, Rs 1.5 lakh for second best film and Rs 1 lakh for all other awards, along with silver medals.

According to officials, the revised awards aim to ensure transparency and fairness in recognizing cinematic excellence for 2021.

Festival garbage after Ayudha puja and Vijayadashami lies uncleared on service road of Airport Road near Ganganagar in Bengaluru on Saturday.
DH PHOTO/B K JANARDHAN

Festival garbage leaves city stinking; DCM orders immediate clean up

BENGALURU, DHNS

The Ayudha Puja celebrations have left the city with piles of garbage. Deputy Chief Minister D K Shivakumar who took note of the situation issued orders to the municipal corporations to ensure that the garbage piles are cleared at the earliest.

"There are also many instances where the public dump garbage on the roadside. I have asked the officials to monitor and penalise them. We will also launch a massive cleanliness campaign soon," he said.

He added that the traffic police have also been asked to penalise people if they observe such incidents.

"We will also monitor through the cameras installed across the city," he added.

The five city corporation commissioners have also been asked to come up with a plan of action to prevent rampant dumping of garbage on the roadsides. He urged people to take pictures and report any such incidents to their respective corporations.

Many areas, especially in and around markets saw huge garbage pile up after the Dasara celebrations. Leftover fruits, flowers, and other waste were mostly disposed of on the roadsides, leaving the roads stinking.

The amount of garbage produced in the city nearly doubled during the Ayudha Puja and Vijayadashmi celebrations, officials from the Bengaluru Solid Waste Management Limited (BSWML) said.

D K SHIVAKUMAR
Deputy Chief Ministe

"There are also many instances where the public dump garbage on the roadside. I have asked the officials to monitor and penalise them. We will also launch a massive cleanliness campaign soon.

SIT questions ambulance drivers

MANGALURU, DHNS: Ambulance drivers involved in transporting bodies of unnatural deaths reported under the Dharmasthala police limits were summoned for questioning by the Special Investigation Team (SIT) probing the mass burial case.

On Saturday, drivers Jaleel and Hamid appeared before the SIT for inquiry.

Speaking to the media after the questioning, Jaleel said, "I have been working as an ambulance driver for the past 21 years in Belthangady. After Unnatural Death Report (UDR) cases, it was the Dharmasthala police who called me to shift bodies for post-mortem. It was driver Hamid who first introduced me to ambulance driving." "Currently, I own three ambulances. I have transported bodies of people who died by suicide, drowning in the Nethravathi river, natural causes, and destitutes," he said.

He added, "The SIT informed me that I will be summoned again as the investigation is ongoing."

Movie Kantara Chapter 1 rakes in Rs 142 crore

BENGALURU, DHNS: The acclaimed Kannada film Kantara: A Legend - Chapter 1 has made headlines for its exceptional box office performance, becoming the highest-grossing Kannada film of the year.

The film has reportedly surpassed the lifetime collections of Hindi releases such as Mirai (Rs 142 cr), Kesari Chapter 2 (Rs 144 cr), and Sky Force (Rs 150 cr). According to box office tracker Sacnilk, the film has grossed Rs 147.5 crore worldwide so far.

Released in six languages, including Kannada, the film earned Rs 19.6 cr and Rs 13.5 cr on its first two days in Kannada, while the Hindi version collected Rs 18.5 cr and Rs 12 cr, respectively. This report is based on the collection till Saturday afternoon.

Modi, Starmer to review trade ties, 'Vision 2035' roadmap

UK PM's visit comes 2 months after landmark free trade pact

NEW DELHI, PTI

British Prime Minister Keir Starmer will undertake a two-day visit to India next week in his first trip to the country since assuming charge in July last year.

Starmer's visit to India from October 8 to 9 will provide a 'valuable opportunity' to reaffirm the shared vision of India and the UK to build a forward-looking partnership, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said on Saturday.

Starmer will hold wide-ranging talks with Prime Minister Narendra Modi in Mumbai on October 9.

The British PM's visit to India came two and a half months after the two countries inked a landmark free trade pact that will increase market access, cut tariffs, and double bilateral trade by 2030.

The landmark trade deal was firmed up during Modi's visit to London in July.

The MEA said two prime ministers, in their talks, will take stock of progress in diverse aspects of the India-UK Comprehensive Strategic Partnership in line with 'Vision 2035', a 10-year roadmap of programmes and initiatives to bolster ties.

The key pillars of the roadmap are trade and investment, technology and innovation, defence and security, climate and energy, health, education, and people-to-people relations.

Keir Starmer

"Both leaders will engage with businesses and industry leaders on opportunities presented by the India-UK Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) as a central pillar of the future India-UK economic partnership," it said.

The two prime ministers will also exchange views on issues of regional and global importance, it added.

Modi and Starmer will also attend the sixth edition of the Global Fintech Fest and deliver keynote addresses in Mumbai.

The two leaders will also engage with industry experts, policymakers, and innovators.

Along with the FTA the two sides also sealed a double contribution convention. It provides for exemption for employers of Indian workers from paying social security contributions in the UK.

The India-UK bilateral trade crossed $ 55 billion in 2023-24. The UK is the sixth largest investor in India, with a cumulative investment of $ 36 billion.

Ecom platforms' cash-on-delivery charges under lens

AJITH ATHRADY
NEW DELHI, DHNS

The Union Ministry of Consumer Affairs has launched an investigation into complaints against ecommerce platforms levying additional charges on customers opting for cash-on-delivery (COD) payments.

"The Department of Consumer Affairs has received complaints against e-commerce platforms charging extra for Cash-on-Delivery, a practice classified as a dark pattern that misleads and exploits consumers [sic]," Union Consumer Affairs Minister Pralhad Joshi posted on X.

"A detailed investigation has been initiated and steps are being taken to scrutinize these platforms closely. Strict action will be taken against those violating consumer rights to ensure transparency and uphold fair practices in India's growing e-commerce sector [sic]," he added.

Dark patterns refer to manipulative tactics employed by companies to extract money or data from consumers without their full awareness.

The issue came to light after several companies made consumers pay a fee if they opted for the cash-on-delivery option rather than prepaying for the order online.

One X user highlighted his experience with a popular ecommerce firm where he was billed Rs 226 under ambiguous heads such as "offer handling fee", "payment handling fee", and "protect promise fee".

The user sarcastically criticised these fees, comparing them to other charges like the "Rain Fee" seen on food delivery platforms such as Zomato, Swiggy, and Zepto.

In response to such concerns, Joshi, in a post on X on Friday, emphasised that these practices would be scrutinised and strict action would be taken against companies infringing on consumer rights.

IN BRIEF

Vishwakarma named new Guj BJP chief

▶ AHMEDABAD, DHNS: Gujarat minister and OBC leader Jagdish Vishwakarma was on Saturday declared the new BJP president of the state unit, succeeding Union Minister C R Paatil.

Vishwakarma was the only leader who filed a nomination in the party's election process.

By elevating Vishwakarma as the state president, the BJP has given prominence to an OBC leader in Gujarat, a state dominated by the powerful Patidar community with Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel at its helm.

A businessman by profession, Vishwakarma is a three-time MLA and is considered close to Home Minister Amit Shah.

The first test for Vishwakarma will be the upcoming local body polls and 2027 assembly elections.

Ultra's family property attached in J&K

▶ SRINAGAR, DHNS: In a bid to tighten the noose around alleged terror networks and their support structures, Jammu and Kashmir Police on Saturday attached property valued at around Rs 2 crore belonging to the family of designated terrorist Sajad Ahmad Sheikh alias Sajad Gul.

Gul is the 'commander' of The Resistance Front terror outfit and the alleged mastermind of the Pahalgam attack.

The TRF is a proxy of the Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) outfit.

According to police, a three-storey residential house in Khushipora area has been attached under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act.

UP woman elopes with lover; hubby jumps into river with 4 kids

SANJAY PANDEY
LUCKNOW, DHNS

In a tragic incident, a man jumped into the Yamuna river in Uttar Pradesh's Shamli district with his four children, apparently after his wife eloped with her lover.

According to reports, Salman worked as a labourer. His wife had allegedly eloped with her lover a few days ago. He prepared three videos purportedly expressing his agony and dejection over his wife's actions and shared them with his parents and sisters two days ago.

In the videos, Salman was heard saying he was left with no option but to end his life. "We will all be dead," he was heard telling his 12-year-old daughter Mahek in one of the videos.

Salman reached the Yamuna bridge on Friday with his four children, aged between three and 12 years, and prepared a video saying that his wife was responsible for their death.

Salman's sister Gulistan said she launched a search for him and the children after they did not return home, and that she came to know on Saturday that he had jumped into the river with the kids. Divers were pressed into service to trace them, but they or their remains were yet to be found. The search was ongoing, officials said.

(If you are experiencing suicidal thoughts and tendencies, please get in touch with the government's mental health helplines 14416 or 1800 891 4416)

Manipur: Ex-CM, BJP MLAs to meet top brass to press for govt formation

SUMIR KARMAKAR
GUWAHATI, DHNS

Former Manipur Chief Minister N Biren Singh and three other BJP MLAs left for New Delhi on Saturday to press the party's central leadership for the formation of a 'popular government' and to apprise them about the law and order situation in the state.

Talking to reporters, Singh said the MLAs would also apprise the central leadership about the issues related to the internally displaced persons and the movement on the highways.

Three MLAs — Thangam Robindro, former minister Sapam Ranjan and Heikham Dingo Singh — accompanied Biren.

Sources said a few more MLAs led by Speaker T Satyabrata Singh are also likely to travel to the national capital to meet the central leadership.

The BJP MLAs are likely to hold a meeting with Sambit Patra, the party in charge of Manipur, and are likely to meet Home Minister Amit Shah.

Manipur has remained under President's rule since February due to the conflict involving the Meitei and the Kuki communities.

A BJP leader in Imphal told *DH* that the party was in favour of restoration of the government, keeping in mind the improvement in the law and order situation in the past few months.

A decision regarding withdrawal of the President's rule is unlikely soon till a solution to the conflict is reached, another leader said.

10 militants arrested from 3 districts of Manipur

Security forces have arrested 10 militants belonging to various proscribed outfits in Manipur during separate operations over the last few days, officials said.

Personnel of the Assam Rifles arrested a "senior commander" of United Kuki National Army and five other militants from the jungles of Churachandpur district on October 1, the paramilitary force said.

Meanwhile, four militants were apprehended from Thoubal and Imphal West districts on Friday, police said. Two active cadres, including a woman, of the banned Kangleipak Communist Party (Apunba) were apprehended at Thoubal Wangkhem, while a self-styled corporal of the People's Liberation Army was arrested from Imphal West, a police officer said.

FUTURE READY

Prime Minister Narendra Modi during the unveiling ceremony of various youth-focused initiatives in New Delhi on Saturday. He launched PM-SETU (Pradhan Mantri Skilling and Employability Transformation through Upgraded ITIs), a centrally sponsored scheme with an investment of Rs 60,000 crore. It envisages the upgradation of 1,000 government ITIs in a hub-and-spoke model comprising 200 hub ITIs and 800 spoke ITIs. PTI

Government of Karnataka
ADMINISTRATIVE TRAINING INSTITUTE
Lalitha Mahal Road, Mysore -570011
File no: ATI/90/EST/EST1/2025-ADMN-ATI Date: 03.10.2025

RECRUITMENT ON DEPUTATION/ CONTRACT BASIS FOR FACULTY AND OTHER POSTS

Administrative Training Institute (ATI), Mysore desires to fill up the posts on Deputation / Contract basis for carrying out various assignments in different disciplines/areas.

For further information related to the posts, job description and other details, please visit the below mentioned link. Application can be submitted from **04.10.2025** and Last date to apply is **03.11.2025.**

Telephone: 0821-2520906/2443835

Website : https://atimysore.karnataka.gov.in/350/recruitment-on-deputation/contract-basis-for-faculty/consultant-and-other-posts/en

Sd/-
Joint Director (Admin)

DIPR/MYSORE/1043/SHIRDI SAI/2025-26

ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಸರ್ಕಾರ
ಕಾರ್ಯನಿರ್ವಾಹಕ ಇಂಜಿನೀಯರರು, ಲೋಕೋಪಯೋಗಿ ಇಲಾಖೆ ವಿಭಾಗ ಬಾಗಲಕೋಟ ಇವರ ಕಛೇರಿ.
ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ:ಲೋಇ:ಬಾವಿ:ಪಿಬಿ:ಕೆಡಬ್ಲು:2025–26/02337 ದಿನಾಂಕ:03–10–2025

–: ಟೆಂಡರ ಪ್ರಕಟಣೆ:–

ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಸಾರ್ವಜನಿಕ ಸಂಗ್ರಹಣೆಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಪಾರದರ್ಶಕತೆ ಆದ್ಯಾದೇಶ 1999–2000ರ ಪ್ರಕಾರ ಆ್ಯಕ್ಟ 2000ರ ನಿಯಮದಂತೆ ಸ್ಟಾಂಡರ್ಡ ಬಿಡ್ ಡಾಕ್ಯುಮೆಂಟ ಕೆ/ಡಬ್ಲೂ–1,2,3 ನಿಯಮದನ್ವಯ ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಲೋಕೋಪಯೋಗಿ ಇಲಾಖೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ನೊಂದಾಯಿತರಾದ ಅರ್ಹ ಗುತ್ತಿಗೆದಾರರಿಂದ KPPP ಪೋರ್ಟಲ್ ಮುಖಾಂತರ ಬಾಗಲಕೋಟ ವಿಭಾಗದ ಅಡಿಯಲ್ಲಿಯ ಈ ಕೆಳಕಾಣಿಸಿದ ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಯ ಟೆಂಡರ ಅಹ್ವಾನಿಸಲಾಗಿದೆ.

ವರ್ಕ ಇಂಡೆಂಟ್ ನಂ: ಸಾಮಾನ್ಯ: 27918, 27985, 10499 ಕಾಲ್–3, 27813, 28023 SC:27884 ST: 28004, CAT II(A):17883

ಈ ಎಲ್ಲ ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಗಳ ಗರಿಷ್ಠ ಟೆಂಡರಗಿಟ್ಟ ಮೊತ್ತ ರೂ.100.00 ಲಕ್ಷ ಹಾಗೂ ಕನಿಷ್ಠ ಮೊತ್ತ ರೂ. 6.00 ಲಕ್ಷಗಳ ವರೆಗಿನ ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಗಳಿಗೆ ಈ ಕೆಳಕಾಣಿಸಿದ ದಿನಾಂಕಗಳಂತೆ ಟೆಂಡರ ಅಹ್ವಾನಿಸಲಾಗಿದೆ.

ಅ) ಟೆಂಡರ ಆಕ್ಷೇಪಣೆಗಾಗಿ ನಿಗಧಿ ಪಡಿಸಿದ ದಿನಾಂಕ:15–10–2025 ರಂದು ಸಂಜೆ 5–30 ಘಂಟೆಯವರೆಗೆ ಬ) ಟೆಂಡರ ಸ್ವೀಕರಿಸುವ ದಿನಾಂಕ:21–10–2025 ರಂದು ಸಂಜೆ 4–00 ಘಂಟೆಯವರೆಗೆ ಕ) ತಾಂತ್ರಿಕ ಬಿಡ್ ತೆರೆಯುವ ದಿನಾಂಕ: 23–10–2025 ರಂದು ಸಂಜೆ 4.30 ಘಂಟೆಯವರೆಗೆ

ಡ) ಆರ್ಥಿಕ ಬಿಡ್ ತೆರೆಯುವ ದಿನಾಂಕ: 24–10–2025 ರಂದು ಸಂಜೆ 4.30 ಘಂಟೆಯವರೆಗೆ

ಸಹಿ/–ಕಾರ್ಯನಿರ್ವಾಹಕ ಇಂಜಿನೀಯರರು,
ಲೋಕೋಪಯೋಗಿ ಇಲಾಖೆ ವಿಭಾಗ ಬಾಗಲಕೋಟೆ.

DIPR/BGK/RO-NO-318/KSMCA/2025-26

Government of Karnataka
TOWN Municipal Council
MUNDARGI-582118
Dist: MUNDARAGI STATE : KARNATAKA
MOB: 08372-259932 E-Mail: ka.mundargi.tmc@gmail.com

NO.GBCMC/Tech/Sec/Tendor/Vahi/ 2025-26 DATE: 04-10-2025

SHORT TERM TENDER NOTIFICATION

Tender has been invited as per Karnataka Transparency in public Procurement Act 1999-2000 subject to Standard Tender Document Rules through e-procurement for a total 01 work Under the 15th Financial Unrestricted (UN Tied) Grant of the Year 2025-26 and Under the Central Government's scheme in mundargi Municipality for a total amount of **Rs. 57.20 lakhs,** For the Indent Nos : 1) DMA/ 2025-26/OW/WORK_INDENT 48637, Therefore tender can be submitted through e-procurement portal website in www.kppp.karnataka.gov.in can be viewed.

Bidders can obtain the tender details from the KPPP Portal, pay the relevant EMD tender fees in ELECTRONIC format and submit the tender on the dates specified below.

1	Last date for submission of tender	17-10-2025 Up to 16.00 Hours
2	Date of opening of technical bid	21-10-2025 Up to 16.30 Hours

The date and other changes related to the said tender will be published in the KPPP Portal and will not be published in a press release.

Sd/- CHIEF OFFICER TMC MUNDARGI
Sd/- PRESIDENT TMC MUNDARGI

DIPR/Gadag/316/DeshpandePublicity/2025-26

ಪಿ.ಎಮ್ ಶ್ರೀ ಕೇಂದ್ರೀಯ ವಿದ್ಯಾಲಯ ನಂ. 1, ಮಂಗಳೂರು-575010
P M SHRI Kendriya Vidyalaya No. 1, Mangaluru-575010

Walk-in-Interview for Teachers against Existing Vacancies : Session 2025-26

Date of Interview : 08.10.2025, Time : 09.00 a.m. onwards

1	TGT	Social Science	**Educational Qualification** Bachelor Degree from a recognized University with at least 50% mark in aggregate in any two subjects among Geography, Economics. History & Political Science at Graduation level with B.Ed and CTET qualification. **Desirable :** 1. Proficiency in teaching in Hindi and English 2. Knowledge in Computer application
2	Vocational Instructor		**Educational Qualification :** - B.E., B.Tech, Electronic & Communication Engineering - Minimum One Year experience in the relevant field.

Applicants to produce original as well as Xerox copies of Certificates and one passport size photograph on the day of Interview.

Sd/- Principal
Kendriya Vidyalaya , Mangaluru- No. 1

KARNATAKA STATE HIGHWAYS IMPROVEMENT PROJECT
(PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT)
Office of the Executive Engineer, KSHIP Division, #F149, 1st Floor, Bharathnagar, Stage-1, East West College Road, BEL Layout, Magadi Road, Bengaluru-560 091.

No:EE/KSHIP/BNG/DIV/TENDER NOTIFICATION/2025-26/01 Date: 04-10-2025

INVITATION FOR TENDER (Through KPP Portal)

Karnataka State Highway Improvement Project proposes to take up the work :"KSHIP-3 Package-1A Shifting of Common Property Resources (CPR's) in Kollegala to Hannur Road" on item rate tender basis on single cover system. Interested bidders can participate through Karnataka Public Procurement Portal (KPPP) of GoK and documents can be downloaded from website: https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in. The last date of receipt of tender is on **16.10.2025 upto 16:30 hours** and the bids will be opened on **18.10.2025 at 11:30 hours.** Additional information can be obtained by visiting the office during office hours.

Note: Please note that henceforth, any changes in the schedule will not be published through Newspapers and further changes will be updated only on the KPP Portal / GoK / KSHIP **Website: www.kship.in**

Sd/-
Executive Engineer
KSHIP Division, Bengaluru.

DIPR/CP/RO3095/AAPL/2025-26

KARNATAKA STATE HANDICRAFTS DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION LIMITED
(A Government of Karnataka Undertaking)
No.45, 3rd Floor, KSHDC COMPLEX, M.G. Road, Bengaluru – 560 001. Phone :080-71204446 /71204446.
e-mail:gmmkshdcl@gmail.com, Website: **www.cauverycrafts.com**

TENDER REFERENCE NO.KSHDCL/2025-26/IND0016 Date: 04.10.2025

SHORT-TERM E-TENDER NOTIFICATION

Karnataka State Handicrafts Development Corporation Ltd., (KSHDCL) invites short-term e-tender under two cover tender procedures from eligible tenderers for manufacture and supply of overall 48 gms, solid sterling silver base is 40 gms and 22 k gold Ganda Bherunda emblem 8 gms duly embossed on one side along with necessary accessories on Sale on Approval (SOA) Basis as per the specification detailed in the notification. The tender notification details may be obtained through e-procurement mode by logging on to website **www.kppp.karnataka.gov.in** The date of commencement of access to tender documents **is 04.10.2025** and last date for submission of bids **is 11.10.2025**.

Sd/- General Manager(Marketing)

Department of Health & Family Welfare
KARNATAKA STATE AIDS PREVENTION SOCIETY
Arogya Soudha, 4th Floor, 1st Cross, Magadi Road, Bangalore - 560 023.
Tel.: 080-2955 7021, e-mail : pdksaps@gmail.com

No: KSAPS/PRC/04/2025-26 Date:03.10.2025

Invitation For Tender(Two Cover)(Call-2) Through e-Procurement

Tender (Two Cover) (Call-2) is invited for Supply of Viral Load Consumables to 7 NACP and 1 Non NACP Viral Load Labs under e-Procurement System. Details are available at e-procurement website: **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in** Last date for submission of tenders : **27.10.2025 upto 5.30 p.m.**

Sd/- Project Director
Karnataka State Aids Prevention Society

DIPR/CP/JA/3081/2025-26

KARNATAKA STATE HANDICRAFTS DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION LIMITED
(A Government of Karnataka Undertaking)
No.45, 3rd Floor, KSHDC COMPLEX, M.G. Road, Bengaluru – 560 001. Phone :080-71204446 /71204446.
e-mail:gmmkshdcl@gmail.com, Website: **www.cauverycrafts.com**

TENDER REFERENCE NO.KSHDCL/2025-26/IND0015 Date: 04.10.2025

SHORT-TERM E-TENDER NOTIFICATION

Karnataka State Handicrafts Development Corporation Ltd., (KSHDCL) invites short-term e-tender under two cover tender procedures from eligible tenderers for manufacture and supply of 22ct Gold Medals on Sale on Approval (SOA) Basis as per the specification detailed in the notification. The tender notification details may be obtained through e-procurement mode by logging on to website **www.kppp.karnataka.gov.in** The date of commencement of access to tender documents **is 04.10.2025** and last date for submission of bids **is 11.10.2025.**

Sd/- General Manager(Marketing)

ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಸರ್ಕಾರ
ಹಾಸನ ವೈದ್ಯಕೀಯ ವಿಜ್ಞಾನಗಳ ಸಂಸ್ಥೆ, ಹಾಸನ
HASSAN INSTITUTE OF MEDICAL SCIENCES, HASSAN (An Autonomous Institute under the Dept of Medical Education, Government of Karnataka) SRI CHAMARAJENDRA HOSPITAL CAMPUS, HASSAN
Website: https://himshassan.karnataka.gov.in/
Phone/Fax No.08172-231699, 231599,
Email:directorhims@yahoo.com

No : HIMS/TS/OTE/2/2025-TNDR-HIMS-HSN Date: 29.09.2025

E-TENDER NOTIFICATION (Through e-procurement only) https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in

HIMS, Hassan, invites tender for supply of Library Furniture on Turnkey Basis to Establishment of New Library at HIMS, Hassan, from the manufacturer or authorized dealers in two cover bid system as per KTTP Act-1999. Sl No 01)Description SUPPLY AND INSTALLATION OF LIBRARY FURNITURE ON TURNKEY BASIS TO ESTABLISHMENT OF NEW LIBRARY AT HIMS HASSAN Required Qty Refer Tender Document EMD:1,88,760/- The Supplier can have access to e-tender documents from 03.10.2025 through website: https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in on payment of transaction fee (non-refundable) as fixed by e-portal. Last date for submission of tender application is up to 03.11.2025 5:00 p.m,. For further details contact the undersigned in the office during working hours or through website: https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in

Sd/- Chief Administrative officer, Hassan Institute of Medical Science, Hassan.

ವಾಸಾಸಂಇ/ಹಿಸನಿ/ಹಾಸನ/652/ಕೆಎಸ್ಎಂಸಿಎ/2025–26

Government of Karnataka
BENGALURU URBAN ZILLA PANCHAYAT
O/o Executive Engineer, Rural Drinking Water & Sanitation Division, First Floor, Zilla Panchayat Building, S. Kariyappa Road, Banashankari (Near Banashankari Temple) Bengaluru-560070.

No.EE/RDW&SD/BNG(U)/TND/07/2025-26/977 Date: 04.10.2025

Karnataka Public Procurement Portal Tender Notice

Tenders are invited through Karnataka Public procurement portal for the works approved Under Various Head of grants for the year 2025-26 Under Two Cover System. The Tender Documents can be obtained and submitted on or before **23.10.2025 up to 4.00 pm.** For further details contact the above address during office hours or visit **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in.**

Sd/-
Executive Engineer,
RDW&S Division, Bengaluru Urban Dist, Bengaluru

DIPR/CP/Shirdi Sai/3092/2025-26

ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಸರ್ಕಾರ
ಕೇಂದ್ರೀಕೃತ ದಾಖಲಾತಿ ಘಟಕ, ಆಯುಕ್ತರ ಕಛೇರಿ
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ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ: ಸ.ಎ.ಸಿ–05/ಸ.ಕೋ.ಪೀ.ದಾ.ಪ್ರ/3/2025–26 ದಿನಾಂಕ: 04.10.2025

ಪ್ರಕಟಣೆ

2025–26ನೇ ಸಾಲಿನ ಎರಡು ವರ್ಷದ ಬಿ.ಇಡಿ ಕೋರ್ಸಿಗೆ ದಾಖಲಾತಿ ಅಧಿಸೂಚನೆ

2025–26ನೇ ಸಾಲಿಗೆ ಎರಡು ವರ್ಷದ ಬಿ.ಇಡಿ ಕೋರ್ಸಿನ ವ್ಯಾಸಂಗಕ್ಕಾಗಿ ರಾಜ್ಯದ ಸರ್ಕಾರಿ, ಮಾನ್ಯತೆ ಪಡೆದ ಅನುದಾನಿತ ಹಾಗೂ ಅನುದಾನರಹಿತ ಬಿ.ಇಡಿ ಕಾಲೇಜುಗಳಲ್ಲಿನ ಸರ್ಕಾರಿ ಕೋಟಾದ ಸೀಟುಗಳ ದಾಖಲಾತಿಗಾಗಿ ಆನ್‌ಲೈನ್ ಮೂಲಕ ಅರ್ಜಿಗಳನ್ನು ಇಲಾಖಾ ವೆಬ್‌ಸೈಟ್‌ನಲ್ಲಿ **ದಿನಾಂಕ: 04/10/2025** ರಿಂದ **ದಿನಾಂಕ: 03/11/2025** ರವರೆಗೆ ಆಹ್ವಾನಿಸಲಾಗಿದೆ.

ವೆಬ್‌ಸೈಟ್ **https://schooleducation.karnataka.gov.in** ನಲ್ಲಿ ಪ್ರಕಟಿಸಲಾದ ಅಧಿಸೂಚನೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ದಾಖಲಾತಿ ವೇಳಾಪಟ್ಟಿ, ಅರ್ಹತೆ, ಮೀಸಲಾತಿ, ಶುಲ್ಕ ಇತ್ಯಾದಿ ವಿವರ ಮತ್ತು ಜಿಲ್ಲಾವಾರು ಬಿ.ಇಡಿ ಶಿಕ್ಷಣ ಸಂಸ್ಥೆಗಳ ಪಟ್ಟಿಯನ್ನು ನೀಡಲಾಗಿದೆ. ಅಭ್ಯರ್ಥಿಗಳು ಅಧಿಸೂಚನೆಯನ್ನು ಓದಿ ಅರ್ಥೈಸಿಕೊಂಡು ಆನ್‌ಲೈನ್ ಮೂಲಕ ಅರ್ಜಿಯನ್ನು ಕ್ರಮಬದ್ಧವಾಗಿ ಭರ್ತಿ ಮಾಡಿ ಸಲ್ಲಿಸಲು ಸೂಚಿಸಲಾಗಿದೆ.

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ಕೇಂದ್ರೀಕೃತ ದಾಖಲಾತಿ ಘಟಕ, ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು

ವಾಸಾಸಂಇ/ವಾಪ್ರ/3097/ಶಿರಡಿ ಸಾಯಿ/2025–26

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ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಪ್ರಕಟಣೆ

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ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು.

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DELHI TEST Rekha faces issues that the BJP earlier used against Cong, AAP govts

Challenges galore as BJP's lone woman CM faces first winter

AMRITA MADHUKALYA
NEW DELHI, DHNS

A month ago, Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta was pictured sitting next to her husband in a meeting with Delhi government officials. The Opposition AAP termed it a "Phulera moment" in Indian politics — the reference being the fictional village of Phulera in the popular OTT show Panchayat where the protagonist's role as panchayat chief is actually carried out by her husband.

In the eight months since she took oath as the chief minister of Delhi in February this year, Gupta, the BJP's only woman CM at present, has courted controversies each passing month.

Recently, she reportedly requested organisers of Durga Puja pandals in the national capital to participate in the government's 'Sewa Pakhwada' – beginning on Prime Minister Narendra Modi's birthday on September 17 – and place the PM's photograph "near the feet of Goddess Durga".

In March, while participating in a debate in the Delhi Assembly, she used street slang, considered derogatory, to refer to beat constables. The 50-year-old first- time MLA elected as the CM in February this year had to clarify later that she did not mean to belittle police personnel, hinting that she was willing to evolve.

When she was elected as the next CM of Delhi in a meeting of the 48 MLAs of the BJP on February 20, many beyond political circles barely knew her.

Gupta, who honed her skills in the Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP) and then later in the BJP, had started her political journey in Delhi University as a student of Daulat Ram College in 1992 where she took part in student politics as part of the student wing of the RSS. By 1995, she had been elected as the secretary of the Delhi University Students' Union (DUSU). In 1996, she was elected DUSU president. Gupta has served as a municipal councillor twice, and has lost Assembly elections twice.

Rekha Gupta

In 1995, Gupta worked in DUSU alongside Congress leader Alka Lamba, who is currently the president of Congress Mahila Morcha. Lamba says that while she did not see eye to eye with Gupta on ideology, they shared the same concerns when it came to women's issues. "Ideologically, we were strongly opposed to each other. But I remember working with her on women's issues — there were issues of women's hostels, safety of women in the campus with more lights and the need for more women's seats and more women's colleges," Lamba recalls.

Gupta's elevation to the top post, though intriguing, is not entirely unexpected, given the BJP's history of choosing faceless names in other states in the recent past, such as Bhajanlal Sharma in Rajasthan, Mohan Yadav in Madhya Pradesh and Vishnu Deo Sai in Chhattisgarh. Political analyst Rasheed Kidwai says that the BJP is borrowing a leaf out of the old Congress book, especially from Indira Gandhi's.

"During Nehru's tenure, regional satraps were larger than life, such as Rajaji, BC Roy and Pratap Singh Kairon. But when Indira Gandhi came, she preferred lightweights. For instance, HN Bahuguna, CV Gupta, DP Mishra, or for that matter, Arjun Singh or Motilal Vora. There's a famous quote by Tangturi Anjaiah, who was selected as chief minister (of Andhra Pradesh) – 'I don't know why he came and why he's going'," Kidwai says.

The political analyst feels the stalwarts of the BJP's Delhi unit have been sidelined to this end. "The decision to elect a relatively unknown face brings in shock value, keeps the elected leader in debt of the central unit, and is usually done when a party is sure-footed in the central stage. Delhi is crucial for the BJP, and Modi and Shah will want to have their imprint here," Kidwai adds.

One of the key challenges that she now faces is the upcoming winter season and ensuing air pollution caused by the burning of stubble in nearby Punjab. The BJP, which had time and again criticised the previous AAP regime in Delhi over the issue as the AAP ruled in Punjab, too, will now face a litmus test over its selection of Gupta.

Another boiling issue for Delhiites which Gupta will need to solve is the pollution in the Yamuna — a cause on which several elections have been fought over the years. The upcoming Chhath festival, considered auspicious by the capital's significant Purvanchali population, is when the river's pollution is the highest. As she has time and again raised the issue, Gupta's actions on this front will be closely watched.

For an informed electorate such as Delhi's, Gupta's stature is a lightweight one, especially in comparison to the last 25 years of governance under her much decorated predecessors Sheila Dixit and Arvind Kejriwal. Will she be able to match this? Gupta has a lot of work ahead to prove herself.

BRS MLA Harish Rao Thanneeru meets bereaved family members of Pole Chandrashekar (inset). PTI

Hyderabad student shot dead at gas station in US

S N V SUDHIR
HYDERABAD, DHNS

A student hailing from Hyderabad, who was searching for a full-time job in the US, was shot dead by an unidentified assailant at a gas station there late on Friday.

The victim, 28-year-old Pole Chandrashekar, moved to the US in 2023 to pursue postgraduate education at the University of North Texas.

After completing his studies six months ago, Chandrashekar was reportedly working part-time at a gas station in Denton, Texas, while seeking full-time employment.

His family has appealed to the authorities to help bring back his mortal remains.

Chandrashekar's brother told reporters that his brother had completed his undergraduate education in Hyderabad.

Expressing grief, Telangana Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy extended his condolences to the family and promised all possible assistance.

The government will stand by Chandrashekar's family and provide all possible assistance to bring his mortal remains back, he said in a social media post.

BRS MLA T Harish Rao, who visited Chandrashekar's family, expressed condolences.

"It is tragic that Chandrashekar Pole, a Dalit student was shot dead early this morning... We demand that the state government take immediate steps to bring back Chandrashekar's mortal remains at the earliest," he said.

This incident is the latest in a string of tragic deaths involving students from Telangana in the United States.

In January, a 26-year-old student was shot dead in Connecticut, while another man from the Ranga Reddy district was found dead with bullet wounds.

In September, a 30-year-old man from the Mahabubnagar district was killed in California after reportedly being shot by police following a scuffle with his roommate.

Hold Bihar polls soon after Chhath: Parties to EC

Also suggest fewer phases to ensure efficiency

ABHYA KUMAR
PATNA

Parties in Bihar on Saturday urged the Election Commission to conduct the assembly elections in the state immediately after the 'Chhath' Puja, to maximise the participation of voters and that it should be completed in as few phases as possible to ensure efficiency.

The proposal was put forth during a review meeting on poll preparedness with Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar and Election Commissioners Sukhbir Singh Sandhu and Vivek Joshi.

The two-day visit to Bihar began with the EC team holding meetings with the representatives of all major political parties.

"To maximise the participation of voters, the parties suggested that the elections be scheduled immediately after the Chhath festival," an EC statement said.

At the meeting, CEC Gyanesh Kumar said political parties are significant stakeholders of a strong democracy and called upon them to fully participate at every stage of the election process, by appointing their polling and counting agents.

"The political parties are the foundations of any democracy and, therefore, should actively participate in elections," the EC reportedly told the leaders' delegation.

According to sources, the EC sought feedback on voters' list discrepancies, polling booth facilities and EVM security.

On Sunday, the EC team is likely to meet the nodal officers of the enforcement agencies — the Income Tax Department, Enforcement Directorate, Customs & Excise, and other top Bihar officials, including the Chief Secretary, the DGP and the Chief Electoral Officer.

Earlier, the EC also held a detailed review with Commissioners, IGs, DIGs, DEOs, SSPs and SPs.

Poll schedule

The poll schedule is likely to be announced soon. As per the law, the new assembly has to be constituted by November 22.

This was the first high-level review by the top EC team in the state after the contentious Special Intensive Revision was carried out in Bihar in July to weed out bogus voters. The EC on September 30 eventually released a final electoral list where Bihar now has 7.42 crore voters, instead of the earlier 7.89 crore voters.

(With inputs from Delhi)

BJP urges EC to verify identity of burqa-clad voters; RJD terms it political conspiracy

NEW DELHI, DHNS: A controversy broke out after Bihar BJP president Dilip Jaiswal on Saturday urged the Election Commission to ensure that women in burqas are properly verified against their voter ID photographs at the polling booths.

The RJD termed the remarks as a 'political conspiracy'. "This is a political conspiracy. Only recently has the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls been carried out. New EPIC cards are to be issued to all voters with fresh photographs. Identification of voters is no big deal. But the BJP wants to push its own agenda," said RJD leader Abhay Kushwaha.

The party also requested the Election Commission to have robust checks ensuring that only 'genuine voters' are exercising their franchise in the upcoming Assembly elections.

Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar with Election Commissioners Sukhbir Singh Sandhu and Vivek Joshi during a meeting with political parties of Bihar. PTI

Jaiswal told reporters that they have asked the EC to hold the elections in one or two phases instead of spreading them out. "It is also important that the identity of voters, particularly burqa-clad women, be verified against their EPIC cards so that only genuine voters are allowed to vote," Jaiswal told reporters.

Jaiswal also said that the BJP has asked for paramilitary forces to be deployed in villages with a significant population of weaker sections.

"They should be deployed in areas where the population is in extremely backward classes, and they should be deployed a few days in advance. A flag march should also be conducted to instill confidence among voters," he added.

(With PTI inputs)

Cong, CPI(ML)L slam EC over voter-list alterations

NEW DELHI, DHNS: The Opposition on Saturday attacked the Election Commission (EC) over alleged discrepancies in the final voter list, with the Congress claiming that the one prepared after the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) was 'orchestrated' at the behest of the BJP, and the CPI(ML)L seeking the list of voters added and deleted from electoral roll with reasons for these actions.

In a letter to CEC Gyanesh Kumar, CPI(ML) L leaders asked the poll panel to make public the names of voters deleted from the list and the reasons for their exclusion.

Congress general secretary (communications) Jairam Ramesh claimed that the EC's claims of reforms were proving to be false, and reports from across Bihar confirmed that the sole purpose of the entire process was to "provide political advantage to the BJP and its allies".

Vice president to meet Rajya Sabha leaders on Oct 7

SHEMIN JOY
NEW DELHI, DHNS

Rajya Sabha Chairman C P Radhakrishnan has called a meeting of 30 floor leaders in the Upper House on October 7, his first formal deliberations with the senior MPs after his election as vice-president almost a month ago.

Radhakrishnan

The meeting, which is also expected to see the attendance of Deputy Chairman Harivansh, is scheduled for 4 pm next Tuesday at the Parliament House Annexe Extension Building, and all floor leaders are invited.

On September 12, hours after his swearing-in, Radhakrishnan had a "courtesy" meeting with a group of Rajya Sabha floor leaders.

This meeting, which comes a month ahead of the Winter Session that is likely to start late November after the Bihar Assembly elections, is scheduled against the backdrop of the Opposition's strained ties with Radhakrishnan's predecessor Jagdeep Dhankhar.

Sources said Leader of the Opposition in the Rajya Sabha Mallikarjun Kharge is unlikely to attend the meeting as he is recuperating after a surgical procedure to implant a pacemaker in his heart.

Trinamool Congress floor leader Derek O'Brien will also not attend the meeting due to prior engagements in Kolkata; the party has nominated deputy leader Sagarika Ghose to attend the meeting.

Invites have also gone to Leader of the House J P Nadda, Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju, Ministers of State Arjun Ram Meghwal and L Murugan, H D Deve Gowda (JD-S), Sharad Pawar (NCP-SP), Tiruchi Siva (DMK), Sanjay Singh (AAP), Sasmit Patra (BJD), M Thambidurai (AIADMK), John Brittas (CPM), P Sandosh Kumar (CPI), and Ramgopal Yadav (SP), among others.

In a meeting with a group of leaders earlier, Radhakrishnan had told them that he intended to run the Rajya Sabha by not creating tension among various parties.

Seeking their cooperation for the House's smooth functioning, sources had then said, Radhakrishnan told the leaders he had had a long tenure as an Opposition lawmaker and would not discriminate against anyone.

Zubeen Garg poisoned, claims arrested band member

GUWAHATI, DHNS: Zubeen Garg's bandmate Shekhar Jyoti Goswami has alleged that the singer was poisoned in Singapore.

The Special Investigation Team (SIT), probing the circumstances that led to the death of the singer, has informed a local court that Goswami had claimed during interrogation that the singer was poisoned by his manager Siddharth Sarma and Assam-based entrepreneur Shyamkanu Mahanta, who organised Northeast Festival in Singapore.

Zubeen and some of his band members were in Singapore to perform at the festival. He died on September 19 while swimming in the sea.

Goswami and a singer of Zubeen's band, Amrit Prabha Mahanta, were arrested on Thursday. Shyamkanu Mahanta and Sharma were also arrested and are currently in SIT remand.

The SIT said Goswami claimed a conspiracy was hatched to depict Zubeen's death as an accident, and Siddharth exhibited suspicious behaviour before the incident.

Goswami also claimed that they chose a foreign venue to conceal their conspiracy and asked him not to share videos of the yacht on which they partied before getting into the sea.

POLITICAL OUTREACH

AIADMK, BJP seek to engage Vijay after Karur tragedy

E T B SIVAPRIYAN
CHENNAI, DHNS

The AIADMK and the BJP see the tragic stampede at a Tamilaga Vetri Kazhagam (TVK) rally in Karur, which resulted in 41 deaths, as an opportunity to reach out to actor-politician Vijay, who has been maintaining a distance from them. Both parties have refrained from blaming Vijay for the stampede, and instead held Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M K Stalin responsible.

The AIADMK and BJP have been courting Vijay because he is expected to corner a chunk of the anti-DMK votes.

Sources told *DH* that a senior BJP leader who helped bring the AIADMK into the NDA has conveyed to Vijay's inner circle the party's support for him. This assurance followed Congress leader Rahul Gandhi's conversation with Vijay on September 28.

"The BJP leader conveyed that the party was ready to help the TVK handle the situation," said a source, adding that while speculation about Vijay joining the NDA or agreeing with the BJP was "premature" and "far-fetched". "Nothing political has been conveyed or assured, but it opened a new channel of communication," said the source.

Vijay

Vijay has publicly declared the BJP his party's ideological opponent and has been openly critical of it in his speeches. Last week, he criticised the AIADMK-BJP alliance, calling it "incompatible".

AIADMK general secretary Edappadi K Palaniswami publicly supported Vijay, saying it was unfair to question his absence among the stampede victims because no one knew what he was experiencing. Former state BJP chief K Annamalai, while urging Vijay to reform his fan base, also emphasised that there was no point in blaming only him. In fact, the AIADMK has been inviting Vijay to join it to put up a spirited fight against the DMK in the 2026 Assembly elections.

TVK sources acknowledged Rahul's call, but said no BJP leader spoke to Vijay. However, the sources refused to say whether any message from the saffron party was conveyed to the actor-politician.

BJP has created walls within the country: Uddhav

MUMBAI, DHNS: Shiv Sena (UBT) leader Uddhav Thackeray on Saturday slammed the BJP, saying it has created walls within the country.

"India is a beautiful country. It has a great culture. However, these people (BJP) have vitiated the entire atmosphere and made it hell. These people have created walls within the country. I have been working hard to prevent further deterioration," Thackeray said.

Slamming the BJP for questioning his Hindutva credentials for allying with the Congress, Thackeray asked whether Chandrababu Naidu and Nitish Kumar are staunch Hindutva followers. "I do not require any certificate from BJP on Hindutva... my grandfather (Prabodhankar Thackeray) was a leading social reformer... our Hindutva has always been progressive."

What is there to talk about?: Shah on Naxal dialogue demand

JAGDALPUR (CHHATTISGARH), PTI

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Saturday ruled out talks with Naxals and said they will have to lay down weapons and accept the government's "lucrative surrender and rehabilitation policy".

Addressing the 'Bastar Dussehra Lokotsav' and 'Swadeshi Mela' in Jagdalpur, Bastar district, he asserted that March 31, 2026, has been set as the deadline to bid farewell to the menace of Naxalism.

"I want to tell all my tribal brothers and sisters to persuade the youth of their villages to lay down their arms. They should shun violence, join the mainstream, and become part of the development of Bastar," he said.

Security forces, including the CRPF and Chhattisgarh police, will give a befitting reply if ultras disrupt peace in Bastar, Shah warned.

Home Minister Amit Shah meets people during his visit to the Danteshwari Temple in Bastar on Saturday. PTI

Shah said he visited the renowned Maa Danteshwari Temple here and had prayed that security forces get strength to free the entire Bastar region from "red terror" by March 31 next year.

Anti-Naxalite operations intensified in Chhattisgarh after the BJP came to power in 2023. Security forces have gunned down over 450 Naxalites in a string of encounters, mostly centred in the Bastar region, since last year.

"Some people have called for talks. Let me make it clear again that both the Chhattisgarh and Central governments are committed to development across Bastar and all Naxal-affected areas. What is there to talk about? A lucrative surrender-and-rehabilitation policy has been put in place. Come forward and lay down your weapons," Shah said.

"Some people in Delhi used to spread misinformation for years that the birth of Naxalism was for the fight for development. But I have come to tell my tribal brothers that the entire Bastar has been deprived of development. The root cause of this is Naxalism," he said.

Shah arrived on a two-day visit to Chhattisgarh on Friday night.

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PRICE OF PEACE India reaffirms stand on Palestine without tying itself to US proposals

Trump's Gaza plan calls for the political end of Hamas

P R KUMARASWAMY

Activists depict US President Donald Trump at a rally in Tel Aviv on Saturday, ahead of the second anniversary of the October 7, 2023, Hamas attack on Israel. REUTERS

The anxious wait appears to be over. Militarily pulverised, diplomatically isolated, and politically pressured, Hamas announced on Friday that it will release all Israeli hostages—whether alive or dead—and expressed its willingness to negotiate the finer details of US President Donald Trump's Gaza Plan.

Just hours earlier, in his typical ultimatum style, Trump declared: "An agreement must be reached with Hamas by Sunday evening at 6 PM, Washington, DC time. Every country has signed on! If this last chance agreement is not reached, all hell, like no one has ever seen before, will break out against Hamas. There will be peace in the Middle East one way or the other." When even powerful states are apprehensive of the consequences of his anger, can Hamas defy the American President?

Hamas's willingness to 'enter' talks and to 'reach' an agreement are two different things. Several well-intended plans have failed when both parties couldn't finalise terms. Will Trump's Gaza Plan be different? One must be cautious.

An Israeli commitment not to strike Qatar was included in the Gaza Plan, and the US-Israel-Qatar tripartite agreement brings the Plan to 20 points. In some ways, it improves on the July New York Declaration, signed by multiple countries.

The Gaza Plan's principal demand is the disarming, dismantling, and political end of Hamas. This has long been Israel's demand and is now gaining support from Arab and Islamic countries, led by Saudi Arabia. After two years of war, mainstream Arab-Islamic countries are ready to label the 7 October attack as terrorism. The internationally recognised Palestine National Authority (PNA), led by Mahmoud Abbas, lost Gaza to Hamas in July 2007. Since moving to Ramallah in 2001, neither Abbas nor Arafat has visited Gaza. Ironically, the PNA now sees Trump's Gaza Plan as a way to regain control over the Strip.

Trump has persuaded eight Muslim-majority countries—Egypt, Indonesia, Jordan, Pakistan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Türkiye, and the UAE—to support his proposal. Some are natural allies and supported or co-authored the New York Declaration, co-sponsored by France and Saudi Arabia.

Pakistan is a more unusual addition. Trump's Plan demands political suicide from Hamas. Will Pakistan's clergy support the government's position? For decades, Pakistani leaders and religious groups have rejected Israeli-Palestinian coexistence and supported Hamas. At the height of the Oslo Accords, Pakistani clergy were more Palestinian than Arafat. Support for Trump's Plan might be a tactical move in Pakistan's rivalry with India—but will the clergy endorse the end of an Islamist movement, or remain more hardline than Hamas?

Interestingly, India isn't a signatory to the New York Declaration, but its policies closely align with it. The Declaration's stance on the October 7 attack as terrorism, support for the PNA, and endorsement of a two-state solution all reflect India's position. Since the start of the violence, India has maintained this stance. It hasn't officially labelled Hamas a terrorist organisation, but it condemned the October 7 attack as terrorism.

Despite opposition from the Netanyahu government, India reaffirmed support for a peaceful two-state coexistence. Yet it recognises that without a clear commitment from the US and Israel, that solution is unlikely. Here, the New York Declaration, recently endorsed by the UN General Assembly, differs from the Trump Plan. The former supports a two-state solution and reflects growing interest—especially among former colonial powers like Britain and France—in recognising a Palestinian state.

By contrast, the Trump Plan emphasises economics over politics. According to the BBC, it states that once Gaza is 'redeveloped' and the PNA 'reformed', "conditions may finally be in place for a credible pathway to Palestinian self-determination and statehood, which we recognise as the aspiration of the Palestinian people." Under this plan, statehood is not a right but merely an aspiration.

This is where India sees advantage. Multilaterally, it will focus on national priorities—terrorism, cross-border infiltration, and countering terror financing. It will be less engaged on less pressing issues, such as endorsing the BRICS statement calling East Jerusalem the capital of a future Palestinian state. Since Palestinian statehood is not imminent, India will uphold its position that Jerusalem's status must be resolved bilaterally and won't be overly concerned with multilateral resolutions—even those it co-signs.

Having not been part of the New York Declaration or Trump's diplomatic courtship, India's position is simpler. It can express unequivocal support for the Gaza Plan; call for an early end to the violence; endorse humanitarian relief to the people of the Gaza Strip; contribute financially to any UN-mandated reconstruction plan for the Gaza Strip; and continue to advocate for the early realisation of the two-state solution. Can New Delhi ask for more?

(The writer teaches contemporary Middle East at the Jawaharlal Nehru University, Delhi)

Pakistan Army floats port proposal to woo Trump: Report

Arabian Sea port plan seen as Pakistan's bid to reframe US ties

LONDON, PTI

The Pakistan Army is attempting to court US President Donald Trump with an audacious pitch to build and operate a port on the Arabian Sea that could give Washington a foothold in one of the world's most sensitive regions, according to a media report on Saturday.

The Financial Times claims to have seen the plan put forward by advisers to Pakistani Army Chief Asim Munir, who have approached US administration officials with an offer involving American investors developing the seaside fishing town of Pasni as a terminal for access to Pakistan's critical minerals.

Pasni lies around 160 km from Iran and 112 km from Gwadar, which already hosts a China-backed port.

The newspaper report points out that the initiative is not official policy but highlights how Pakistani officials are exploring ways to capitalise on geopolitical upheaval in South Asia. The proposal has reportedly been raised with some US officials and was shared with Munir ahead of a meeting with Trump at the White House late last month, two civilian advisers to the Army Chief told the paper.

However, a senior Trump administration official said the US President and his advisers had not discussed such a proposal. According to the plan, the proposed Pasni port would be linked to a new railway to transport minerals from Pakistan's interior, particularly copper and antimony, a key ingredient in batteries, fire-retardants and missiles.

The blueprint anticipates the port would cost up to $1.2 billion, with financing to be a mix of Pakistani federal funds and US-backed development finance. It excludes "direct basing" to avoid serving as a US military installation, but is seen as an effort to rebuild and reframe ties frayed over Pakistan's support for the Taliban during the US-led war in Afghanistan.

A senior Pakistani military official told the newspaper that Munir "does not have any advisers in an official capacity", adding that the port idea "surfaced in private discussions" with US businesses, had not been "submitted through official channels" and "remains a commercial idea pending appropriate consideration".

Appeals court blocks Trump's birthright citizenship order

BOSTON, AP/PTI: A federal appeals court in Boston ruled that the Trump administration cannot withhold citizenship to children born to people in the country illegally or temporarily.

A three-judge panel of the 1st US Circuit Court of Appeals became the fifth federal court since June to either issue or uphold orders blocking the president's birthright order.

The court concluded that the plaintiffs are likely to succeed on their claims that the children described in the order are entitled to birthright citizenship under the 14th Amendment. "The lessons of history thus give us every reason to be wary of now blessing this most recent effort to break with our established tradition of recognising birthright citizenship and to make citizenship depend on the actions of one's parents rather than — in all but the rarest of circumstances — the simple fact of being born in the US," the court wrote.

Trump's order would halt automatic citizenship for babies born to people in the US illegally or on a temporary stay.

Sean 'Diddy' Combs gets 4-yr jail for sex abuse

NEW YORK, AP/PTI

Sean 'Diddy' Combs was sentenced on Friday to four years and two months in prison for transporting people across state lines for sexual encounters, capping a sordid case that featured harrowing testimony and ended in a forceful reckoning for one of the most influential figures in hip-hop.

Since Combs has already served a year in jail, the sentence means that the 55-year-old could get out in about three years. While prosecutors sought a sentence of more than 11 years, his lawyers wanted him freed immediately and said the time behind bars has already forced his remorse and sobriety.

Sean 'Diddy' Combs

Combs was convicted in July of flying his girlfriends and male sex workers around the country to engage in drug-fuelled sexual encounters and over many years. However, he was acquitted of sex trafficking and racketeering charges that could have put him behind bars for life.

Japan set to elect first female PM

Takaichi will replace Ishiba

TOKYO, AP/PTI

Sanae Takaichi holds a press conference in Tokyo on Saturday. REUTERS

Japan's governing party on Saturday elected former Economic Security Minister Sanae Takaichi, a hard-line ultra-conservative and China hawk, as its new leader, making her likely to become the country's first female prime minister.

In a country that ranks poorly internationally for gender equality, the 64-year-old Takaichi makes history as the first female leader of Japan's long-governing conservative Liberal Democratic Party (LDP). Takaichi is one of the most conservative members of the male-dominated party.

An admirer of former British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, Takaichi is a protege of former Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's ultra-conservative vision and a regular at the Yasukuni Shrine, seen as a symbol of Japan's wartime militarism, which could complicate Tokyo's relations with its Asian neighbours. Takaichi beat Agriculture Minister Shinjiro Koizumi, the son of popular former Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi, in a runoff in a vote by the LDP on Saturday.

Takaichi replaces Prime Minister Shigeru Ishiba as the party hopes to regain public support and stay in power after major election losses.

She is likely to be Japan's next prime minister because the party remains by far the largest in the lower house, which determines the national leader, and because opposition groups are highly splintered.

Takaichi later said she will immediately work on stemming rising prices, while also focusing on diplomatic and security challenges.

US Border Patrol conducts major raid in Chicago

CHICAGO, REUTERS: US Border Patrol agents deployed to Chicago led a late-night raid on an apartment building this week, rappelling from helicopters onto rooftops and breaking down doors in an operation authorities said targeted gang members, but which swept up US citizens and families.

The show of force highlighted President Donald Trump's unprecedented use of Border Patrol agents as a surge force in major cities, re-routing personnel who would normally be tasked with guarding America's borders with Mexico and Canada.

As part of the raid, some US citizens were temporarily detained and children pulled from their beds, according to interviews with residents and news reports. Building hallways were still littered with debris two days later.

Trump, a Republican, has vowed to escalate immigration enforcement in Chicago and other Democratic strongholds that limit cooperation with federal operations. Border Patrol — staffed with some 19,000 agents — has increasingly taken on a new role in major cities, led by Gregory Bovino, the agency's commander-at-large.

SU DO KU X - 3696

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SOLUTION TO 3695

8	1	5	7	4	2	6	9	3
4	3	2	6	9	5	7	8	1
9	6	7	3	1	8	4	5	2
6	4	3	2	8	7	5	1	9
2	9	1	4	5	3	8	6	7
5	7	8	9	6	1	3	2	4
7	8	6	1	2	4	9	3	5
3	2	9	5	7	6	1	4	8
1	5	4	8	3	9	2	7	6

To solve the puzzle:
The objective is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column, each 3x3 box and each shaded diagonal line contains the same number only once.

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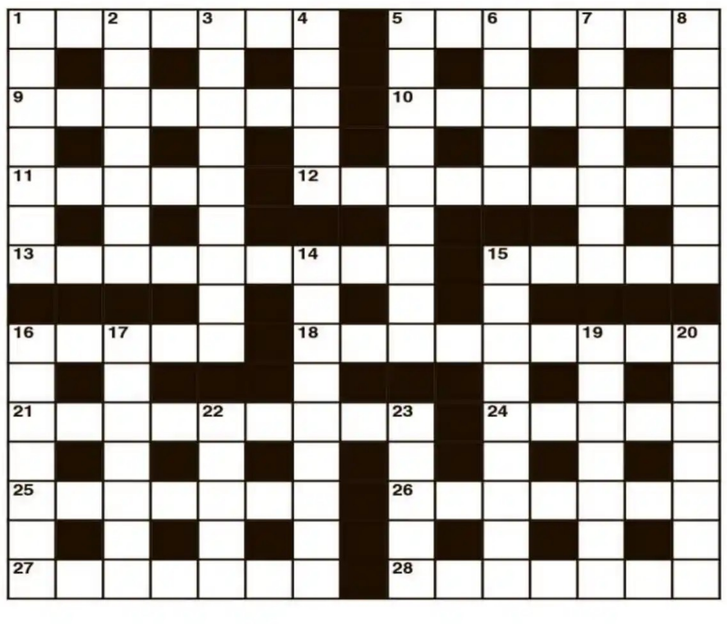
◆ SUNDAY CROSSWORD CHALLENGE 2648 ◆



ACROSS
1 Collapse under pressure (7)
5 Navigational aid (7)
9 As a substitute (7)
10 Dog of mixed breed (7)
11 Make suitable (5)
12 Cause chaos (4,5)
13 Peremptorily (3,2,4)
15 Betray secrets (5)
16 Fibre used in ropemaking (5)
18 Narrow escape (5,4)
21 Vendetta (5,4)
24 A place frequented (5)
25 Shut out (7)
26 Thoughtful (7)
27 Russian novelist 1828-1910 (7)
28 Stockings and socks (7)

DOWN
1 The Windy City (7)
2 Parvenu (7)
3 Abundant (9)
4 Ultimately become (3,2)
5 Fluctuate (4,3,2)
6 Chew vigorously (5)
7 Advent (7)
8 Seek after (7)
14 Deadliest foe (4-5)
15 Have hallucinations (3,6)
16 Undermine loyalty of (7)
17 Uncomplaining in adversity (7)
19 Insulting (7)
20 Matter of pure chance (7)
22 Discourage (5)
23 Profundity (5)

SOLUTIONS TO CROSSWORD 4008

CRYPTIC
ACROSS: 9, Talks into 10, Tear-away 12, A-to-M 13, Lead on 14, Engaged 15, Not likely 17, A-X-minster 18, Distan-(Augus)t 20, M-edus-a 21, Spin (rev) 24, No-w-on-der 26, Peculiar 28, I-tem (rev) 29, Spirit 31, Present 34, Dis-covers 36, Played out 38, Off-ends 39, Lo-O-k-in 40, Bill 41, Sec-tions 42, Patronise.
DOWN: 1, Strained 2, Al-MO-st 3, I-nte-rest 4, Coldly 5, Standard 6, Water music 7, Bagging 8, Taught (taut) 11, Ado-ring 16, In a row 19, Score 20, Mar (rev) 22, Plane 23, Allege (a ledge) 25, Depression 26, Pat 27, Bird dog 30, Rest-less 31, Pian-Ist-s 32, Tot-all-ed 33, Con-note 35, S-often 36, Prompt 37, O-rigin.

EASY
ACROSS: 9, Ambulance 10, Tactical 12, Iris 13, Select 14, English 15, Negligent 17, Tentacles 18, Evident 20, Rustle 21, Well 24, Declined 26, Atypical 28, Rote 29, Mutate 31, Prattle 34, Camembert 36, Buttercup 38, Entreat 39, Teller 40, Undo 41, Renowned 42, Eliminate.
DOWN: 1, Patience 2, Ebbing 3, Interest 4, Decent 5, Statutes 6, Screenplay 7, Diagram 8, Racial 11, Thistle 16, Ideals 19, Inert 20, Rid 22, Exact 23, Mirage 25, Nauseating 26, Awe 27, Bracken 30, Altitude 31, Pathetic 32, Employee 33, Emperor 35, Matter 36, Bullet 37, Con man.

Don Carlos wins main event

CHENNAI RESULTS

Suleiman Attaollahi-trained Don Carlos, ridden by Trevor Patel, won the upper division of the Frankel Cup, the feature event of the Chennai races on Saturday.

1. Desert Warrior Handicap - 1200M: Black Label (Dhruv Kumar) Farid Ansari 1; Dakshin Vijay (AS Peter) 2; Everwin (Jitendra Singh) 3; Royal Exemplar (N Darhan) 4; Wb: 1-1/4, Lnk, 2-1/4L. T: 1:25.06. TB: Fahad Khan. Fav: Royal Exemplar.

2. Own Beauty Handicap -1400M: Black Diamond (Chetan Shantilal) Yash Narredu 1; Nozomi (Mukesh Kumar) 2; Balgownie (Inayat) 3; Chief Admral (Akshay Kumar) 4; Wb: 2-1/2, 1-3/4L, Nk. T: 1:28.52. TB: Deepesh Narredu. Fav: Black Diamond.

3. Rose Bowl Plate - 1400M: Legacy (Villoo Poonawalla) Yash Narredu 1; Larissa (Trevor Patel) 2; Golden Sabre (N Darshan) 3; Elsa (Akshay Kumar) 4; Wb: 1/2, 4, 3/4:. T: 1:29.24. TB: Deepesh Narredu. Fav: Legacy.

4. Exhilaration Handicap - 1800M: Maana (Ms Ameeta Mehra) Trevor Patel 1; Blue Picasso (Yash Narredu) 2; Blue Eyed Boy (N Darshan) 3; Alpha Domino (Jitendra Singh) 4; Wb: 16-1/4, 9-3/4, 1L. 1:55.02. TB: Darius Byramji. Fav: Maana.

5. Frankel Cup (Div I) - 1200M: Don Carlos (KN Dhunjibhoy) Trevor Patel 1; Rise Again (Farid Ansari) 2; King's Battalion (Akshay Kumar) 3; Constant Variable (Koshi Kumar) 4; Wb: 1-1/2, Shd, 1-1/4L. T: 1:13.12. TB: Suleiman Attaollahi. Fav: Don Carlos.

6. Frankel Cup (Div II) - 1200M: Proposed (Muthiaiah) Farid Ansari 1; Mother's Grace (Mukesh Kumar) 2; Andorra (Vinod Shinde) 3; Ruling Star (Koshi Kumar) 4; Wb: Snk, 3-1/2, 1l. . T: 1:13.48. TB: Ramanathan. Fav: Stag's Leap.

7. Chaitanya Chakram Handicap - 1400M: Efficacy (Daulat Chabria) Trevor Patel 1; Anigraha (Hindu Singh) 2; Element (Brisson) 3; Bluemed (MS Doora) 4; Wb: 4-1/4, 2, 2L. T: 1-26.78. TB:Suleiman Attaollahi. Fav: Efficacy.

Bengaluru dividends

I race: Rs 36w; 13, 26p; Fc: Rs 236; Q: Rs 125; Shp: Rs 44; Thp: Rs 22; Tri: Rs 801 & 343; Ex: Rs 3,607 & 562. **II race:** Rs 16w; Rs 10, 30p; Fc: Rs 194; Q: Rs 114; Shp: Rs 72; Thp: Rs 22; Tri: Rs 285 & 80; Ex: Rs 722 & 309. **III race:** Rs 14w; 12, 12, 26p; Fc: Rs 27; Q: Rs 23; Shp: Rs 26; Thp: Rs 66; Tri: Rs 373 & 151; Ex: Rs 585 & 148. **IV race:** Rs 11w; 10, 13p; Fc: Rs 12; Q: Rs 13; Shp: Rs 14; Thp: Rs 26; Tri: Rs 56 & 45: Ex: Rs 48 & 15. **V race:** Rs 13w; 12, 19, 15p; Fc: Rs 97; Q: Rs 62; Shp: Rs 38; Thp: Rs 27; Tri: Rs 285 & 101; Ex: Rs 1,616 & 1,645. **VI race:** Rs 24w; 11, 16, 18p; Fc: Rs 51; Q: Rs 34; Shp: Rs 33; Thp: Rs 48; Tri: Rs 264 & 152; Ex: Rs 627 & 242. **VII race:** Rs 11w; 10, 16, 21p; Fc: Rs 25; Q: Rs 27; Shp: Rs 24; Thp: Rs 47; Tri: Rs 121 & 38; Ex: Rs 230 & 86.

Jackpot: Rs 120 (692). **Runner-up:** Rs 36 (997). **Treble:** Rs 49 (93).

Regina Memorabilies wins feature

PUNE RESULTS

Regina Memorabilies, from the stables of Imitaz Sait and ridden by Neeraj Rawal, won the Threptin Fillies & Mares Stakes, the feature event of the Pune races on Saturday.

1. Panamera Plate (Div II) - 1400M: Seneca (Haider Soomar) Sandesh 1; Remy Red (Mosin) 2; Illusionist (Neeraj Rawal) 3; Simola (Umesh) 4; Wb: 1-1/4, 2-1/4L, Nk. T: 1:27.65. TB: A Jodha. Fav: Seneca.

2. Gruezi Plate -1400M: Ultimo (Rajesh Monga) Sandesh 1; Ataash (Antony Raj) 2; Alpine Star (Avinash Paswan) 3; Spanish Eyes (N Bhosale) 4; Wb: 3-1/2, 2-1/4L, Lnk. T: 1:24.80. TB: Pradeep Chouhan. Fav: Ultimo.

3. Rao Saheb Kedari Gold Trophy - 2000M: King Ke (Vijay Shirke) G Vivek 1; Black Thunder (Aditya Waydande) 2; Doctor Dolly (Sandesh) 3; Zarak (Pranil) 4; Wb:6L, Hd, Nk, T: 2:03.90. TB: Pesi Shroff. Fav: King Ke.

4. October Handicap - 1200M: Darcy (Sanjeev Kumar Gaur) Sandesh 1; Ministry Of Time (P Dhebe) 2; Esteban (Umesh) 3; Santana Row (Ramswarup) 4; Wb: 4-1/4, Snk, 3/4L. 1:09.29. TB: Faisal Abbas. Fav: Darcy.

5. Threptin Fillies & Mares Stakes - 1800M: Regina Memorabilies (Equus Racing) Neeraj Rawal 1; Psychic Star (G Vivek) 2; Madam Rich (A Prakash) 3; Thalasaa (Sandesh) 4; Wb: 3/4, 1-1/4, 1/2L. T: 1-50.65. TB: Imtiaz Sait. Fav: Psychic Star.

6. Yogender Singh Salver - 1200M: Wind Dancer (DR Thacker) Sandesh 1; Escape Velocity (Ramswaruu) 2; Star Impact (G Vivek) 3; Maratha Admiral (NS Parmar) 4; Not Run: You & Silver Strike. Wb: 2, 4-1/2L, Snk. T: 1:08.75. TB: Dallas Todywalla. Fav: Come September.

7. Panamera Plate (Div I) - 1400M: Wings Of Fury (Hemant Dharnidharka) Sandesh 1; Red Merlot (Avinash Paswan) 2; Timeless Fortune (Suraj Narredu) 3; Treasure Gold (G Vivek) 4; Wb: 1-1/2, Lnk, 2L. T: 1-26.77. TB: A.Jodha. Fav: Wings Of Fury.

Bengaluru dividends

I race: Rs 12w; 10, 51, 16p; Fc: Rs 482; Q: Rs 239; Shp: Rs 241; Thp: Rs 24; Tri: Rs 770 & 153; Ex: Rs 1,924 & 687. **II race:** Rs 22w; Rs 12, 11, 15p; Fc: Rs 35; Q: Rs 18; Shp: Rs 26; Thp: Rs 52; Tri: Rs 147 & 167; Ex: Rs 398 & 169. **III race:** Rs 12w; 10, 15, 14p; Fc: Rs 37; Q: Rs 28; Shp: Rs 29; Thp: Rs 29; Tri: Rs 64 & 23; Ex: Rs 878 & 627. **IV race:** Rs 15w; 10, 34, 33p; Fc: Rs 583; Q: Rs 198; Shp: Rs 132; Thp: Rs 73; Tri: Rs 2,299 & 637: Ex: Rs 42,026. **V race:** Rs 59w; 11, 15p; Fc: Rs 98; Q: Rs 39; Shp: Rs 25; Thp: Rs 53; Tri: Rs 458 & 411; Ex: Rs 818 & 206. **VI race:** Rs 22w; 10, 24, 12p; Fc: Rs 168; Q: Rs 116; Shp: Rs 67; Thp: Rs 40; Tri: Rs 669 & 555; Ex: Rs 21,196 (c/o) & 9,083. **VII race:** Rs 17w; 10, 77, 14p; Fc: Rs 879; Q: Rs 702; Shp: Rs 201; Thp: Rs 45; Tri: Rs 1,584 & 329; Ex: Rs 64,452 & 6,905. **Jackpot:** Rs 1,275 (261). **Runner-up:** Rs 244 (585). **Treble:** Rs 467 (14).

Red Bishop for feature

HYDERABAD SELECTIONS

Red Bishop, from the stables of Pesi Shroff and to be ridden by Trevor Patel, is fancied to win the Race2win Foundation Hyderabad Deccan Derby, the plum event of the Hyderabad races run over a distance of mile and a quarter at the races on Sunday.

The first race starts at 12:25 pm

1. Delhi Race Club Cup - 1400M: NRI Star 1, Aos Si 2, Natu Natu 3.

2. Bangalore Turf Club Cup - 1600M: Nkalanzinzi 1, Take A Breath 2, Shubhrak 3.

3. Madras Race Club Cup - 1800M: Misty Night 1, Miss Smiley Angel 2, Black Dust 3.

4. Royal Calcutta Turf Club Cup (Div I) - 1200M: Darling's Boy 1, Romantic Grey 2, High Speed Drive 3.

5. Mysore Race Club Cup - 1200M: Turiya 1, Equine Love 2, Safala 3.

6. Royal Western India Turf Club Cup - 1100M: Petaluma 1, Knight Crusader 2, High Heels 3.

7. Turf Authorities Of India Cup - 1400M: Nonpariel 1, Uchchaihshravas 2, Akido 3.

8. Race2win Foundation Hyderabad Deccan Derby - 2000M: Red Bishop 1, Corte Madera 2, Mountain Jewel 3.

9. Royal Calcutta Turf Club Cup (Div II) - 1200M: Timeless Vision 1, Ragnarok 2, Cherie Chevalier 3.

Day's best: Petaluma.

I jackpot: 1, 2, 3, 4 & 5.

II jackpot: 5, 6, 7,8 & 9.

I treble: 2, 3 & 4. **II treble:** 4, 5 & 6.

III treble: 7, 8 & 9.

CRICKET FIRST TEST

Done and dusted IN A JIFFY

India dismiss Windies for 146 to post an innings and 140-run win

SIDNEY KIRAN
AHMEDABAD, DHNS

As India declared at their overnight score of 448/5—a mammoth lead of 286 runs—upon arrival on the third morning, the result of the opening Test against the West Indies was a foregone conclusion. The only question was how soon India would pack up their hapless opponents. And it didn't take long as the hosts wrapped things up in a haste -- an hour and a half after lunch here on Saturday.

Vice-captain Ravindra Jadeja, who scored a brilliant 104 not out, completed a wonderful Test with a fine 4/54 effort to be adjudged the Player of the Match, while first innings' wrecker-in-chief Mohammed Siraj (3/31), Kuldeep Yadav (2/23) and Washington Sundar (1/18) chipped in beautifully as the West Indies were bowled out for just 146 in 45.1 overs, India scoring a thumping innings and a 140-run victory at the Narendra Modi Stadium.

India skipper Shubman Gill sprang a surprise right after checking in on Saturday. Yes, India were way ahead of the contest at having dismissed West Indies for a paltry 162 in the first innings, but the expectation was for Gill to give overnight batter Washington Sundar and the next man, Nitish Kumar Reddy, some much-needed batting practice. While Sundar has at least engaged himself in two first-class matches in the County Championship following the bruising England series, Nitish, who missed the last two Tests at Old Blighty due to a knee injury, had played just one game versus Australia A in Lucknow. An outing with the bat here would have been good practice.

Gill and head coach Gautam Gambhir had other ideas, though. They just wanted their bowlers to hasten the end that would give them a couple of extra days off, a rarity in the crowded calendar. And West Indies batters duly obliged with another inept show that exposed their inadequacy to handle high-quality opposition.

West Indies' slide began as early as the eighth over when Nitish pulled off an exceptional airborne catch at square leg to dismiss opener Tangerine Chanderpaul off Siraj. Within a blink of an eye, West Indies were staring down the barrel after being reduced to 46/5, batter after batter gifting his wicket on a platter through poor shot-making. Not one from the top-order, barring Alick Athanaze (38), showed any aptitude, application or the will to fight. It seemed like they'd already resigned themselves to defeat.

Athanaze and Justin Greaves delayed the inevitable by forging a 46-run partnership for the sixth wicket, but as soon as Sundar prised out the former in the eighth over after lunch, the end was near. West Indies tail-enders then swung their bats wildly for sheer entertainment, but Indian bowlers stuck to their guns to keep chipping away at the wickets before sealing victory at exactly 1:40 pm—the match lasting a grand total of seven and a half sessions. India will now fly to New Delhi knowing a whitewash is there for the taking, while West Indies, who haven't beaten India in a Test in the subcontinent since the 1994-95 series, know nothing less than a miracle will snap that streak.

Ravindra Jadeja (left) followed up his unbeaten 104 on Friday with a four-wicket haul as India completed an innings win over West Indies on the third day of the first Test in Ahmedabad on Saturday. PTI

SCORE BOARD

WEST INDIES (I Innings): 162
INDIA (I Innings): 448/5 decl
WEST INDIES (II Innings):

Campbell c Sudharsan b Jadeja (32b, 1x4)	14
Chanderpaul c Nitish b Siraj (23b, 1x4)	8
Athanaze c&b Sundar (74b, 3x4)	38
King c Rahul b Jadeja (18b, 1x4)	5
Chase b Kuldeep (4b)	1
Hope c Jaiswal b Jadeja (14b)	1
Greaves lbw Siraj (52b, 4x4)	25
Pierre (not out) (28b, 2x4)	13
Warrican c Gill b Siraj (2b)	0
Layne c Siraj b Jadeja (13b, 3x4)	14
Seales c & b Kuldeep (12b, 1x4, 2x6)	22
Extras (B-4, NB-1)	5
TOTAL (all out, 45.1 overs)	**146**

Fall of wickets: 1-12 (Chanderpaul), 2-24 (Campbell), 3-34 (King), 4-35 (Chase), 5-46 (Hope), 6-92 (Athanaze), 7-98 (Greaves), 8-98 (Warrican), 9-122 (Layne).

Bowling: Bumrah 6-1-16-0, Siraj 11-2-31-3, Jadeja 13-3-54-4 (nb-1), Kuldeep 8.1-3-23-2, Sundar 7-1-18-1.

Result: India won by an innings and 140 runs.

Series: India lead 2-match series 1-0. PoM: Ravindra Jadeja.

Second Test: Oct 10-14 (New Delhi).

Is it over for Jadeja in white-ball cricket?

SIDNEY KIRAN
AHMEDABAD, DHNS

On a day when he celebrated his surprise elevation as the vice-captain of the Indian Test team with a 11th Player of the Match award, Ravindra Jadeja was forced to swallow the bitter pill of being dropped from the ODI squad for the Australia series starting October 19 in Perth.

The 36-year-old Jadeja, who was part of the victorious Champions Trophy squad this February-March and has been in exceptional form with both bat in the five-match Test series in England as well as the opening Test here against the West Indies, was ignored for the trip Down Under, keeping in mind the seam-friendly conditions in Australia.

With fellow left-arm spinning all-rounder Axar Patel—five years younger than Jadeja — now being the premier choice in limited overs along with Kuldeep Yadav, it could well be considered the end of the road for India's Most Valuable Player in recent years. India have picked Washington Sundar both for the ODI and the ensuing T20I series in Australia as they look to rebuild the team for the 2027 World Cup in South Africa, Zimbabwe and Namibia.

Although the writing is on the wall, chairman of the selection committee Ajit Agarkar said Jadeja, who has retired from T20Is, is still in the reckoning and his omission was purely because of the conditions. "At the moment, to take two left-arm spinners to Australia is not possible. He is clearly in the scheme of things with how good he is. But there will be some competition for places. Of course, he was there in the Champions Trophy squad because we took those extra spinners with the conditions there.

"At the moment, we could only carry one (to Australia) and get some balance in the team with Washi and Kuldeep there as well. I don't think we are going to need more than that in Australia. You can't accommodate everyone. It's nothing more than that."

After the series against Australia, India are set to host South Africa and New Zealand in three ODIs each. The squad for those series will give an indication of what the selection committee actually thinks about Jadeja.

Two T20 stars who didn't feature in the ODI squad for Australia were Abhishek Sharma and Tilak Varma. While Abhishek was the Player of the Series in the just-concluded Asia Cup with 314 runs, Tilak was the star of the final against Pakistan, scoring a brilliant 69 not out in a tense final. Agarkar said the duo are close to making the cut for ODIs.

"At the moment, Rohit (Sharma) and (Shubman) Gill are likely to open. There's Yashasvi Jaiswal. People tend to forget how good he is as well. And Tilak's very close. Again, we've taken a 15-man squad."

AJIT AGARKAR
Chief of senior selectors

"At the moment, we could only carry one (to Australia) and get some balance in the team with Washi and Kuldeep there as well. I don't think we are going to need more than that in Australia. You can't accommodate everyone. It's nothing more than that.

India favourites vs ragged Pakistan

COLOMBO, PTI

A battle high on emotional quotient and less on cricketing acumen will feature India as overwhelming favourites against a dishevelled Pakistan trying to find balance and rhythm in a Women's World Cup game amid continuing geopolitical tensions between the two bitter neighbours.

After three Sundays of India-Pakistan men's Asia Cup matches, it's time for the women to take centrestage, though the record suggests little suspense about the outcome.

India and Pakistan have played 27 times in women's internationals across formats. India hold a commanding 24-3 advantage, with Pakistan's three wins coming only in T20 cricket. In ODIs, India have a 100 per cent record, winning all 11 matches between the two sides. Both teams began their World Cup campaigns in contrasting fashion. Hosts India defeated Sri Lanka by 59 runs.

In contrast, Pakistan, collapsed against Bangladesh, losing by seven wickets in a match where they struggled against both pace and spin. India currently occupy the fourth spot after all teams have played a game each. The Women in Blue will eye the opportunity to boost their net run rate, which becomes crucial at the fag end of the tournament. Harmanpreet Kaur and Co. will head into the fixture high on confidence.

The squad depth was on full display in the opener when despite staring down the barrel at 124 for 6, the lower middle order rose to the occasion putting up a 250 plus target in 47 overs.

Political backdrop

Away from cricket, the contest carries added tension. Gone are the days when Indian players shared lighter moments with former Pakistan captain Bismah Maroof's daughter during the 2022 World Cup. On Sunday, in line with the stance taken by the men's team at the Asia Cup, the Indian players are also expected to skip the customary handshake with their Pakistani counterparts.

India hold a dominating 24-3 advantage in internationals across all formats against Pakistan with latter's three wins coming in T20s. AFP

SL vs Aus game washed out

The Women's World Cup clash between Sri Lanka and holders Australia in Colombo was abandoned without a ball being bowled on Saturday because of persistent rain.

The teams had gone through their warm-ups and were ready for action when the heavens opened, forcing the ground staff at R Premadasa Stadium to roll out the covers.

Vidarbha leave ROI with a mountain to climb

NAGPUR, PTI: Vidarbha stayed firmly in control of the Irani Cup final, setting Rest of India a stiff 361-run target before reducing them to 30 for two in 12 overs when rain forced an early close on the fourth day here on Saturday.

Resuming at 96 for two, the Ranji Trophy champions were bowled out for 232 in 94.1 overs, but a handy first-innings lead of 128 gave the hosts enough cushion to push RoI onto the backfoot.

Seamer Anshul Kamboj rocked Vidarbha early with a superb three-wicket burst in successive overs.

He first removed overnight batter Danish Malewar (16) with the second ball of the day, then accounted for Yash Rathod (five) in his next over before trapping opener Dhruv Shorey (27) lbw, reducing Vidarbha to 105/5 in five overs into the fourth morning.

Skipper Akshay Wadkar (36 off 125 balls) held the innings together with his dogged resistance, adding 39 with Harsh Dubey (29) and later 35 with Darshan Nalkande (35), as Vidarbha ensured their innings did not implode.

Wickets, however, kept tumbling at the other end, with Gurnoor Brar (2/41), Saransh Jain (2/52) and Manav Suthar (2/82) backing up Kamboj (4/34) to bowl them out.

Brief scores: Vidarbha: 342 all out & (O/n: 96/2) 232 all out in 94.1 overs (Aman Mokhade 37, Dhruv Shorey 27, Akshay Wadkar 36, Harsh Dubey 29, Darshan Nalkande 35; Saransh Jain 2-52, Manav Suthar 2-82, Anshul Kamboj 4-34, Gurnoor Brar 2-41) vs ROI: 214 & 30/2 in 12 overs.

ROI's Anshul Kamboj picked up four wickets to reduce the damage on the fourth day of Irani Cup. PTI

Marsh steers Oz to series win

MOUNT MAUNGANUI (NEW ZEALAND), PTI: Captain Mitchell Marsh scored a sparkling maiden T20I century to steer Australia to a three-wicket win in the third and final match against New Zealand on Saturday, sealing a 2-0 series victory.

Opener Marsh completely dominated the run chase, hitting an unbeaten 103 off 52 balls.

Brief scores: New Zealand: 156/9 in 20 overs (Tim Seifert 48, Michael Bracewell 26, James Neesham 25; Josh Hazlewood 2-26, Xavier Bartlett 2-25, Sean Abbott 3-25) lt to Australia: 160/7 in 18 overs (Mitchell Marsh 103 n.o.; Jacob Duffy 2-29, James Neesham 4-26). **Result:** Australia won by 3 wickets. **PoM & PoS:** Mitchell Marsh. **Series:** Aus won the 3-match series 2-0.

Private security for Ashwin

Ravichandran Ashwin will be provided private security with his Big Bash League franchise Sydney Thunder anticipating an enhanced interest from the Indian diaspora during the team's training session at the Olympic Arena ground, according to the media, reports PTI from Sydney.

It is also learnt that Ashwin would bring in his private crew, who would film his BBL journey for his YouTube channel.

Anisimova blows away Gauff to enter China Open final

BEIJING, AFP: US Open runner-up Amanda Anisimova crushed defending champion Coco Gauff in just 58 minutes on Saturday to reach her first China Open final.

The third seed thrashed second-seeded fellow American Gauff 6-1, 6-2 in Beijing.

Anisimova will play either fifth seed Jessica Pegula, also of the United States or 26th-seeded Linda Noskova of the Czech Republic on Sunday.

"I was able to put on a really good performance," Anisimova, beaten in the final in New York by Aryna Sabalenka, said afterwards.

"I knew I was gonna have to play really well against Coco if I wanted to get the win and I'm really excited to be in the final."

Amanda Anisimova

Sinner, Zverev win

World No. 2 Jannik Sinner launched his Shanghai Masters title defence Saturday by breezing past Germany's Daniel Altmaier 6-3, 6-3 while Alexander Zverev advanced despite toe trouble.

Sinner, fresh from winning the China Open, broke early in both sets to take control and ease himself comfortably into the third round.

Sinner's path to retaining the title has been made easier by the withdrawal of great rival Carlos Alcaraz, who dropped out last minute to rest.

The Italian's next match is on Sunday against the Netherlands' Tallon Griekspoor.

Zverev defied a foot problem to book his place in the third round beating France's Valentin Royer 6-4, 6-4.

Manish, Vaishnavi emerge champions

NEW DELHI, PTI: Tamil Nadu's Manish Sureshkumar and Vaishnavi Adkar of Maharashtra clinched the men's and women's singles titles respectively in the Fenesta Open National Tennis Championship here on Saturday.

In the men's singles final, Manish overcame Keerthivassan Suresh 6-4, 6-2 in a two-hour contest, showing his consistency and composure under pressure.

Easy for Vaishnavi

Vaishnavi outgunned Aanksha Nitture 6-1, 6-2 to bag the women's singles title.

In the Under-18 category, Harshini N edged past Snigdha Kanta 6-1, 2-6, 6-4 in the girls' singles final. In the boys' singles final, Tavish Pahwa triumphed over Hruthik Katakam 7-6 (2), 1-0 (retired), after the latter was forced to withdraw due to injury.

In the men's doubles final, the pair of Nitin Kumar Sinha and Maan Kesharwani defeated Manish Sureshkumar and Abhinav Sanjeev 6-4, 3-6, (10-50) in a thrilling contest.

Water polo teams lose

ADITYA K HALDER
AHMEDABAD, DHNS

Indian men's and women's water polo teams started their campaign in the group stages of the Asian Aquatics Championships with one-sided defeats to Singapore here on Saturday.

The women's team went down 10-23 in the morning session while the men lost 8-20 in the last group match of the day.

The unranked men's team, however, started brightly as they took the lead thrice in the opening quarter with their lead striker Bhagesh Kuthe and team-mate Sarang Vaidya scoring early on. World No. 26 Singapore responded to each goal quickly and before the home side could realise, the South East Asians took 4-3 lead by the end of the second quarter.

India, however, suffered big blow early in the second quarter as Bhagesh was permanently suspended from the match following his third major foul. It was all Singapore show from there on for the next three quarters with their Indian-origin captain Sanjiv Rajandra scoring four goals while Wen Zeh Goh managed a hat-trick.

The gulf in quality was apparent as Singaporeans only look better by effectively using the rolling substitutions to rest and rotate players. The story was similar in the women's game early in the morning. But they had positives to take from the game as Risha Purokayastha scored a hat-trick. She was backed by Kripa Ranichithra, who scored a brace too before World No. 19 side overwhelmed them with their quality.

Despite the defeats, India's road to the quarterfinals seems comfortable as the men's team need to finish among the top four in the five-team Group A while the women's team will qualify for quarters even if they don't register a win in their four-team Group A. But any favourable result will make their knockout draw easier.

Results: Men: China: 9 lt to Iran: 14; Thailand: 12 lt to Japan: 24; Singapore: 20 bt India: 8. **Women:** India: 10 lt to Singapore: 23; Kazakhstan: 12 lt to Thailand: 14.

Indian goalkeeper Aneesh Babu (left) prepares to block a shot by Singapore's Jayden See Tien during their group match in Ahmedabad on Saturday.

◆ ON TV ◆

CRICKET

Women's World Cup: India vs Pakistan (3 pm). **LIVE** on **Star Sports Network.**

FOOTBALL

EPL: Aston Villa vs Burnely, Everton vs Crystal Palace, Newcastle vs Nottingham Forest, Wolves vs Brighton **(all, 6:30 pm)**, Brentford vs Man City **(9:00 pm)**. **LIVE** on **Star Sports Network.**

TENNIS

Shanghai Masters: Day 5 **(10 am)**. **LIVE** on **Sony Sports Network.**

PARA ATHLETICS

World C'ships: Day 8 **(9 am)**. **LIVE** on **DD Sports.**

MOTORSPORT

Formula 1: Singapore GP **(main race, 5:30 pm)**. **LIVE** on **F1Tv Pro, FanCode.**

CAUGHT OFF-GUARD Sports Ministry's new selection criteria for Asian Games have become topic of heated discussion

Perform or perish

India sent a team of over 600 athletes for the last Asian Games in China where they crossed 100 medals for the first time in the continental meet. PTI FILE PHOTO

HITA PRAKASH
BENGALURU, DHNS

A new set of 'selection criteria' for the 2026 Asian Games laid down recently by the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports has become the hot topic of online conversations among the Indian sport-loving community. Naturally, what followed were opposing viewpoints with arguers split between the result-oriented pragmatists and process-driven idealists. Those who oppose the new guidelines, however, refuse to spell out their reservations for obvious reasons.

To summarise in short the five-page guidelines announced by sports minister Mansukh Mandaviya a few days ago, an athlete (in measurable individual sports) will make it to the Indian squad only if he/she has matched or bettered the 6th-place performance from the previous edition of the Asiad. For example, at the 2022 Hangzhou Asian Games, the sixth-placed runner clocked 10.16 seconds in the men's 100m final race which now becomes the qualifying time for an Indian sprinter aspiring to fly to Aichi-Nagoya in Japan next year.

For non-measurable sports, the athletes must have finished within top-6 at the most recent Senior Asian Championships or his/her world ranking is among top-6 of Asian nations in international rankings as of 10 days before submission deadline of the final list. For team sports, it is made mandatory for them to have produced a top-8 finish or ranked inside the top-8 in Asia.

The same standards apply for other multidisciplinary sports events such as Para-Asian Games, Commonwealth Games, Asian Indoor Games, Asian Beach Games, Youth Olympics, Asian Youth Games, Commonwealth Youth Games, similar events in para-sports and winter sports. Out of the 12 clauses mentioned, the fifth specifies relaxations with justifiable reasons for consideration while the 12th states that only those sportspersons, coaches and support staff cleared by the government will be part of the contingent and bars any extra member even at no cost to the government.

It is a 'perform or perish' approach which U Vimal Kumar, former badminton player and now a coach, is completely in support of and opines that the selection criteria, despite looking/ sounding harsh, will move sport in the country in the right direction.

"We need to understand that these guidelines have been made clear a year before the start of the Asian Games," Vimal tells *DHoS*.

"That way you are keeping the athletes also on their toes. They need to be alert and know that they cannot take things for granted. Because in my opinion, the elite athletes are getting every support these days and there is nothing wrong in expecting podium finishes," says the Olympian and an Asian Games bronze medallist from the 1986 Seoul edition.

The 62-year-old is reminded of how the 1988 Seoul 100m Olympic champion Carl Lewis finished sixth at the US trials for the 1992 Barcelona Games and failed to qualify and defend his title at the showpiece race in Spain.

"I was representing India at those Games in badminton. I went to watch athletics because we thought Carl would be competing. Turns out, he hadn't made it. Instead, Carl won the gold in long jump.

"I remember thinking the US selection trials are very harsh because they pick the squad based on that one trials. But then you understand that it is good to put systems in place if we require good results. We need to take these guidelines positively," explains the Dronacharya Awardee.

On the contrary, many believe, in an unpredictable sporting world picking only sureshot medallists will rob potential winners who could be sitting just outside the top-6/8. As for the athletes, who understand the paper-thin margins between winning and losing, the bar being raised is an indication for them to accept that the race to wear the Indian jersey at big-ticket international events is primed to get more heated up.

"Our selection into the Indian squad would be guaranteed based on the finishing positions at Open Nationals and a few other domestic events or trials prior to the Asian Games. From now on, it will be purely based on timings," a track and field athlete, who didn't wish to be named, tells *DH*.

"Yes, it will become tougher and the competition will be cut-throat. The pressure to perform and to prove worthy of our place in the Indian team has definitely increased. But, I guess, it's good," adds the athlete.

Pradeep Kumar S, swimming coach and Dronacharya Awardee, is looking at the bigger picture and explains why there is no reason for panic and the new criteria will help sports in India scale new peaks.

"Of course matching sixth or eighth positions will not be easy, especially in swimming. But then, we need to do something to improve our standards," feels Pradeep.

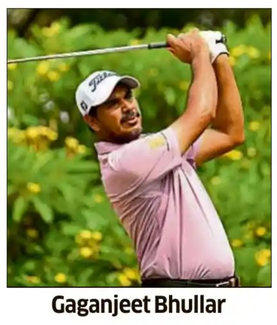
"Asian Games is not an exposure meet, Asian Games is a performing meet. There are many other international competitions where we can experiment and consider as exposure meets. But at the Asian Games we need to go and perform and you know I feel the majority of those people who are going in should at least enter the final. We are talking about matching the 6th-place timing that happened four years back. It is fair because there should be improvement with all the technology and new training methods. So we should be able to cope up with those timings," points out Pradeep.

India have won a total of 778 medals - 183 gold, 238 silver and 357 bronze - in the 19 editions of the Asian Games till date since its inception in 1951. Athletics has contributed the most with 283 medals - 85 gold, 102 silver and 96 bronze - ahead of shooting with 80 medals - 16 gold, 30 silver and 34 bronze.

The country has never topped the medals tally with a second spot on the table as their best finish at the inaugural edition hosted in New Delhi in 1951 and a third-place finish in 1962 Jakarta, Indonesia.

At the previous continental bash held in 2022 Hangzhou, China, the Indian contingent comprising 661 athletes breached the 100-medal mark for the first time by returning with a haul of 106 medals - 28 gold, 38 silver and 40 bronze - to claim the fourth position on the table behind hosts China (383 medals), South Korea (190) and Japan (188).

Aimed at challenging these Asian powerhouses and surpassing the above mentioned numbers, a refined approach has been set into motion. And the outcome of this "trimming" will be known 12 months from now.



Gaganjeet Bhullar

Bhullar on track for Jakarta joy

JAKARTA, PTI: Indian golfer Gaganjeet Bhullar carded a one-under 69 to grab a share of the three-way lead with Wade Ormsby (67) of Australia and Scott Vincent (62) of Zimbabwe, going into the final round of the Jakarta International Championship, here Saturday.

Bhullar, a five-time winner in Indonesia, was left to rue one costly mistake on ninth hole, when he double bogeyed the hole despite sitting at the middle of the fairway after another perfect drive.

The leaders are just one ahead of Thai pair of Sadom Kaewkanjana (64) and Poom Saksansin (66), with compatriot Pavit Tangkamolprasert, Steve Lewton of England, Stefano Mazzoli of Italy, a shot further back on nine-under.

Japan's Kazuki Higa is still in with a chance of a hat-trick on the Asian Tour after a three-under round of 67 on the third day.

Shriyanshi, Tasnim in final

AL AIN (UAE), PTI : Kidambi Srikanth's run ended in the semifinals but rising shuttlers Tasnim Mir and Shriyanshi Valishetty set up an all-Indian women's singles summit clash with contrasting wins at the USD 120,000 Al Ain Masters Super 100 tournament here on Saturday.

The 20-year-old Tasnim, a former BWF World Junior No. 1, rallied to beat Turkey's fifth seed Neslihan Arin 9-21, 21-17, 21-10 while seventh seed Shriyanshi outclassed Indonesia's Chiara Marvella Handoyo 21-11, 21-12 at the Khalifa bin Zayed Stadium.

FOOTBALL EPL

Gunners shoot to the top

Rice, Saka strike in win over West Ham; Man United down Sunderland

LONDON, AFP

Declan Rice (right) scores Arsenal's opening goal during their 2-0 win over West Ham at the Emirates Stadium in London on Saturday. REUTERS

Declan Rice came back to haunt former club West Ham as Arsenal moved top of the Premier League, while Manchester United handed Ruben Amorim some relief with a 2-0 win over Sunderland on Saturday.

In Mikel Arteta's 300th match in charge, the Gunners proved far too strong for the struggling Hammers in a 2-0 win at the Emirates Stadium to further their ambitions of a first Premier League title for 22 years.

Victory came at a cost for Arsenal as captain Martin Odegaard was forced off injured before half-time for the third time this season.

However, the strength in depth now on offer to Arteta has made light of Arsenal's injury troubles.

Rice, who left West Ham for a club record £105 million ($141 million) in 2023, ended the visitors' resistence by blasting high into the net on the rebound after Alphonse Areola parried Eberechi Eze's drive.

Bukayo Saka made the points safe midway through the second half from the penalty spot after Jurrien Timber was brought down by El Hadji Malick Diouf.

Arsenal edge one point ahead of Liverpool, who are in action later at Chelsea.

Defeat leaves West Ham still languishing in the relegation zone.

Relief for Amorim

Amorim conceded on the eve of Sunderland's visit to Old Trafford he needs results quickly to avoid becoming the latest United manager to suffer the sack.

The Portuguese had taken just 34 points from his previous 33 Premier League games in charge, but enjoyed a rare convincing win to give him some breathing space over the international break.

Before kick-off Old Trafford fell silent to honour the victims of a terror attack on a Manchester synagogue this week.

Amorim's bold calls with his team selection paid off as goalkeeper Senne Lammens kept a clean sheet on debut, while Mason Mount justified his place over Matheus Cunha with the opening goal.

Mount eased the home fans' tension with a fine finish from Bryan Mbeumo's cross on eight minutes.

Bruno Fernandes saw a shot tipped onto the woodwork by Robin Roefs as United dominated the first half.

Benjamin Sesko doubled the Red Devils' advantage with a predatory finish from a long throw-in for his first Old Trafford goal since a £74 million move from RB Leipzig.

There was nearly a twist at the end of the half as Sunderland were initially awarded a penalty, only for VAR to intervene due to insuffient contact by Sesko on Trai Hume.

Sunderland began the weekend in fifth after a dream start to their return to the top flight, but the Black Cats were dealt a reality check to end their four-game unbeaten run.

Tottenham showed their newfound defensive resolve under Thomas Frank to end Leeds' year-long unbeaten league run at Elland Road with a 2-1 victory.

Mohammed Kudus' first goal for Spurs secured all three points after Noah Okafor cancelled out Mathys Tel's opener for the visitors.

"That feeling to get over the line, to get three points, was big," said Frank after his side moved up to third.

Liverpool can retake top spot later if they can get back to winning ways at Chelsea.

The defending champions have lost their last two matches against Crystal Palace and Galatasaray in the Champions League.

Club World Cup champions Chelsea also badly need the points after a three-game winless run in the Premier League.

Results: Leeds: 1 (Okafor 34th) lt to Tottenham: 2 (Tel 23rd, Kudus 57th); Arsenal: 2 (Rice 38th, Saka 67th) bt West Ham: 0; Man United: 2 (Mount 8th, Sesko 31st) bt Sunderland: 0.

Praveen, Bhyan, Soman on podium

NEW DELHI, PTI

There was a tinge of sadness in Praveen Kumar's walk following his bronze in high jump, while Ekta Bhyan looked at the positive side after failing to retain her title and settling for silver in the club throw event on the penultimate day of World Para Athletics Championships here on Saturday.

India added a silver and two bronze, to take their tally to 18 (6-7-5), their best performance at the Worlds with a day to go. Their previous best was in 2024 Kobe, Japan, where they won 17 medals (6-5-6). Brazil continued to top the charts with 37 medals (12-18-7).

India's third medal on the day came in men's shot put F57 category with 42-year-old army man Soman Rana bagging the bronze with a season's best of 14.69m.

Paris Paralympic gold-medallist Praveen, a favourite to win the men's T64 high jump, recorded a season's best of 2.00 metres but fell short to finish behind Uzbekistan's Temurbek Giyazov who recorded a personal best of 2.03m to take gold.

'Still feel unsafe'

A day after being bitten by a stray dog during training at the Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium, Kenyan coach Dennis Maragia has spoken out about the incident, saying he still feels unsafe despite assurances from organisers.

The incident took place on Friday at the World Para Athletics Championships. A Japanese coach was also bitten in a separate incident the same day.

"Even after what happened yesterday, I don't feel any measures have been taken or the dogs have been moved. I just saw a dog passing by," Maragia said.

Reigning paralympic champ Praveen Kumar cleared 2.00m to win bronze in New Delhi on Saturday. PTI

Jagathishree scripts fairytale victory

BENGALURU, DHNS: Chennai's Jagathishree Kumaresan (One Racing) scripted a fairytale victory starting from last on the grid in the girls Stock 165cc race to overshadow a commanding win by Rahil Pillarisetty (RACR Castrol Power1) in the premier Pro-Stock 301-400cc Open category as the duo lit up the fourth round of the MRF MMSC FMSCI Indian National Motorcycle Racing Championship at the Madras International Circuit in Chennai on Saturday.

Having crashed on the out-lap during the qualifying session this morning, defending champion Jagathishree could not set a time and started the race last on the 13-bike grid. But the 21-year-old put in a sensational ride that saw her cut through the field and move into the lead in just three laps and then hold position over the next two for a superb win, her fifth in a row.

The results (Provisional - all 6 laps unless mentioned, all Race-1): National Championship: Pro-Stock 301-400cc Open (4 laps): Rahil Pillarisetty (Hyderabad, RACR Castrol Power 1) (07mins, 23.397secs), 1; Sarthak Chavan (Pune, Petronas TVS Racing) (07:28.675), 2; Rakshith Dave (Chennai, Petronas TVS Racing) (07:30.927), 3.
Pro-Stock 200cc Open: Senthilkumar (Coimbatore, RDX Torque Racing) (11:52.899), 1; Soorya PM (Chennai, LGE Racing) (11:54.246), 2; Mohan Babu (Chennai, Rockers Racing) (11:54.364), 3.
Super Stock Intermediate 165cc: Kamal Navas (Chennai, pvt) (12:43.102), 1; Raj Kumar (Coimbatore, Motul Sparks Racing) (12:43.176), 2; G Balaji (Chennai, pvt) (12:43.385), 3.
Stock 301-400cc (Novice): Mohamed Mikail (Thiuvallur, Mad Rabbit Racing) (12:11.479), 1; Kamal Navas (Chennai, Rockers Racing) (12:15.310), 2; Varun Patil (Bengaluru, Mad Rabbit Racing) (12:16.600), 3.
Stock 165cc (Novice): Rajender Beedani (Hyderabad, MAI Racing) (13:01.172), 1; Lal Nunsanga (Aizawl, Motul Sparks Racing) (13:01.838), 2; Akarsh Jangam (Vijayawada, MAI Racing) (13:06.690), 3.

Girls' Stock 165cc race winner Jagathishree Kumaresan poses with her trophy in Chennai.

Impressive Russell holds off Verstappen to claim pole

George Russell

SINGAPORE, AFP

George Russell in a Mercedes took pole position on Saturday for the Singapore Grand Prix ahead of Red Bull's Max Verstappen, as McLaren were outpaced around the Marina Bay Circuit.

Championship leader Oscar Piastri will start on the second row after coming third while his McLaren teammate Lando Norris was only fifth.

Russell set a blistering lap of 1min 29.158sec, 0.182sec clear of Verstappen.

His fellow Mercedes driver Kimi Antonelli was fourth to split the two McLarens.

The Ferrari pair of Lewis Hamilton and Chalres Leclerc were sixth and seventh respectively.

Isack Hadjar (RB), Oliver Bearman (Haas) and Fernando Alonso (Aston Martin) completed the top 10.

Verstappen won the previous two grands prix, in Monza and Baku, and is challenging the season-long dominance of the McLarens at the top of the standings.

He now has a chance of a maiden victory in Singapore that would keep him in the hunt for a fifth consecutive world title, having closed the gap to Piastri to 69 points and to 44 points on Norris.

McLaren are looking to wrap up the constructors' championship this weekend, where a podium finish for one of their cars will ensure a second consecutive title with six races to spare.

Liam Lawson, who on Saturday crashed his RB for the second successive practice session causing a red flag, managed to qualify in 14th after his engineers repaired the damage between the sessions.

THE DIGITAL ALARMIST

Alice in Trumpland: A guided tour

Roger Marshall
is a computer scientist, a newly minted Luddite and a cynic

If you are planning to visit the US in the next few years, make sure to visit the Donald J. Trump Presidential Library in Miami in his adopted home state of Florida, right next to his Doral golf course and his new hotel.

Shortly after Trump left office, the presidential library bearing his name was established. This is in keeping with the practice, started in 1941, of setting up federal presidential libraries in each president's home state (Trump's is New York) once the president has left office. Like most libraries with significant holdings, this one too has several cavernous rooms with plenty of bookshelves. With books. This is especially noteworthy since DJT wasn't particularly fond of reading anything other than his tax returns or *The Art of the Deal, TAOTD* for short.

In addition to the main library, there is a library annex, a special collections section, an audio-visual room, and a gift shop.

The rooms in the main library have a unique numbering system – TAO1 through TAO5. When you walk into TAO1, you are struck by how neatly and uniformly the books have been arranged. Also, you marvel at the fact that all the books are of the same size. You pull out a book at random and look at the title. *The Art of The Deal*. You take out another book, again at random, and glance at the title. Ditto. Two copies, perhaps? You walk across the room and look at yet another book. Same deal.

Truly bewildered, you go into the next room, TAO2, and select a book at random. Guess what, it is in Korean, but the book jacket looks oddly familiar. Here too, the books are all the same size and neatly arranged. The books in TAO3 are in Russian, and the ones in TAO4 and TAO5 are in Hindi and Chinese, respectively. All 50,000 copies of *TAOTD*, translated into many, many languages – second only to the Bible. Not as popular as God, but close. The Tao of DJT.

You didn't know DJT was a polyglot, did you? Please check with his ghostwriter. No, not the one who is rumoured to have helped DJT get into an Ivy League school.

The library annex labelled the All My Children (Note to readers: AMC was a long-running vapid TV soap opera during the 1960s-70s) annex has three rooms that contain books written by DJT's three oldest children. Multiple copies, naturally.

The two-room special collections section is truly awesome. In the middle of the first room stands a full-size statue of DJT holding a copy of his yet-to-be-published manuscript, The Art of the Steal. If it reminds you of Chairman Mao, you are sadly misinformed. DJT was no fan of Communism. It is really too bad that the entire statue is gold-plated, since you cannot make out his signature hairstyle.

The second room, which speaks to DJT's artistic and architectural bent of mind, is totally barren. The south-facing wall is absolutely white. As are the other three walls. Not a speck of colour on any of them – black, brown, yellow or red. Please, no graffiti. The audio-visual room may disappoint since it has a lot of tapes, but they are all empty.

When you step out into the extensive grounds of the library, you will be amazed by how much it mirrors the contents of the second room in the special collections section. No trees, just asphalt. A real tribute to DJT's commitment to the environment.

Don't forget to pick up a souvenir or two at the grift (sic) shop, which has an elaborate collection of MAGA hats of different sizes, even for the newborn. In case you get hungry, the concession stand across from the gift shop sells Big Macs, freedom fries, and vanilla shakes. Supersized ones cost more. Worried about obesity? Well, don't. DJT didn't care either.

The best time to visit is over the Memorial Day weekend when the Miss America Pageant is held on the grounds of the library. It is a lot of fun to watch the scantily clad contestants walk down the handicapped access ramp leading to the library. There is no entrance fee, but you have to sign a non-disclosure agreement to get into the library. But do make sure to drop off the agreement in one of the boxes at the exit gate. You surely don't want to reveal all the surprises the library has in store for future visitors, do you?

The mandatory exit fee of $59.95 gets you your very own signed copy of *TAOTD*. Plus a photograph of the former president to adorn your living room or private library. Free, of course.

(Last week, Florida approved the site for the library. This is a work of satire.)

SARKARI SECRETS

Lessons for ECI, from the states

This column is being published between two landmark dates occurring a fortnight apart, namely, the UN-declared International Day for Universal Access to Information (IDUAI) and the anniversary of the enforcement of India's RTI Act. An international study report released on that day (September 28) ranks the Asia-Pacific region second after Central and Eastern Europe for providing some information in response to common test RTI applications filed across more than 120 countries. The findings place the African region at the bottom of the pile. Apparently, in some countries of the Arab region, it was not possible to even submit the test RTIs. Clearly, despite 140 countries adopting RTI laws, the people's right to know is not uniformly respected, let alone fulfilled across the globe.

India was included in this comparative study. While the Union Health Ministry disclosed the total expenditure incurred on buying COVID vaccines (as revealed in Parliament in 2023), the Environment, Forests, and Climate Change Ministry transferred the test RTI to the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB). CPCB replied that it had not received any funds to be used for remediation measures, as no major environmental incidents had occurred between 2021-23. So, the test results are positive here!

Our own RTI Act will complete two decades of implementation next week. Assessment reports may be released, some of which might show how poorly this law has been faring in recent years. Review articles may be written, some either declaring its demise or prophesying such a fate in the foreseeable future. While acknowledging the many setbacks that the regime of transparency has faced since 2005, a few positive stories from recent months deserve to be highlighted to show that the glass is not only half empty but also half full.

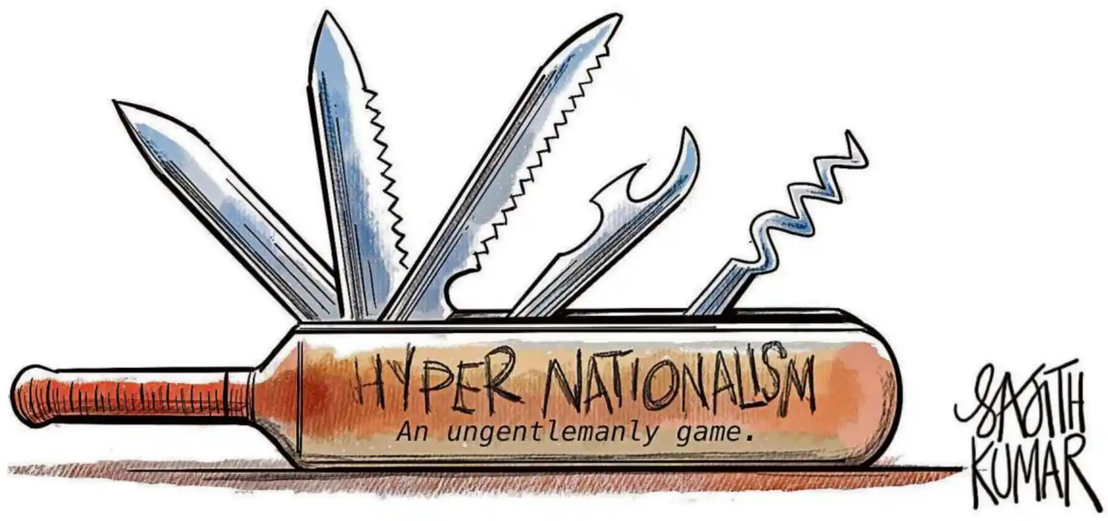
Readers may recall reading my angst-ridden outpourings in these columns about the abysmal track record of the Election Commission of India (ECI) vis-à-vis its transparency obligations under, not only the RTI Act, but also the very election laws and rules it is mandated to implement. For example, in the middle of last year's Lok Sabha elections, ECI claimed that it did not have a compiled list of Returning Officers (ROs) who conducted those elections. Later on, ECI treated like *sarkari* secrets, other election-related records – be it the list of expenditure-sensitive constituencies, vulnerability mapping reports, suspicious transaction reports received from banks during the operation of the Model Code of Conduct, election observers' reports, ROs' scrutiny reports submitted after the end of polling, or even absolute voter turnout figures recorded in Form 17-C, at every polling station.

Venkatesh Nayak
wakes up every morning thinking someone somewhere is hiding something

However, my recent experience with some of the states has been refreshingly positive. Contrary to the common practice of public authorities rejecting requests for voluminous information, the office of the Chief Electoral Officer (CEO), Maharashtra, counted about 2,500 pages of last year's election-related records, charged additional fees and postage, and delivered crystal-clear photocopies after receiving payment. When an appeal was filed about a handful of missing pages (to be expected when bulk photocopying is involved), the Joint CEO scheduled a telephonic hearing within a few days and supplied them free of charge, soon after.

A similar request was filed simultaneously with the CEOs of Haryana and Jammu and Kashmir (J&K). Haryana sent thousands of pages of scanned records, by email, entirely free of charge, within a month. The request posted to the Srinagar office of J&K's CEO did not receive a response for a couple of weeks. So, another request was despatched to their Jammu office. Within a few days, more than a thousand pages of scanned records were delivered by email, believe it or not, free of charge. Later, as this CEO's website had not yet displayed the vote tally of candidates in Form-20 for the 2024 elections, another RTI application was submitted. That RTI was transferred to all the districts, and they are sending scanned copies, one by one via email – and yes, free of charge. Lest readers blame my 'infamous' reputation arising from these columns, let me tell you, these offices might not know me from Adam.

Where there is a will, there is a way. The ECI would do well to emulate these examples of good practice of the very authorities it supervises during elections. Adopting a pro-transparency approach can reduce the flak it receives for its performance and act as a confidence-building measure for the citizenry and the opposition parties. Will the triumvirate at Nirvachan Sadan pay heed?



OUTSIDE

The light beyond the last curtain

Whether the curtain was meant to hide or reveal is as easy to imagine or understand as the origin of a staircase, whether it was invented to go up or climb down. Its etymological history announces its courtly origin, and that is a surprise. It's a surprise because one is conditioned to think of it as a prop – a necessary prop – of domestic life. Curtains, while emphasising the boundary between the outside and the inside, protect it from view, from light, reminding us that it's not just the elements and animals that need to be kept out but the eyes. The curtain, then, establishes the bloodline of the gaze – the determination of the private and public domains, the architectural habit, all of these are predicated on various degrees of visibility.

Opacity and translucence – as I move through a neighbourhood of mixed-income groups, I notice that the curtains move between these two poles. Two sets of curtains in tall glass windows in one, half-drawn, letting in the light, keeping out the gaze, and shutting out everything at night. They declare taste and wealth, almost like an expensive pair of sunglasses – keeping out the sun isn't enough, one must be seen keeping it out as if it, too, were art. In the same compound, in a corner, is a tiny tin-roofed house – for housekeeping staff, possibly their family. Its curtains are neither bought from a furnishings store nor have they been passed down from the owner of the house. It's the remainder of a yellowish sari, one end folded and stitched to allow a sturdy string to pass through it. Suddenly turned into a curtain in its new life, it seems to have surprised itself and, by extension, the outsider.

Lower down the lane, a man irons clothes on a mobile four-wheeled cycle van. I do not live here, but I've noticed him at different times of the day, whenever I've walked through this neighbourhood. Like a tree, he seems to have forsaken movement, the to-and-fro of legs and curtains. Like a tree, he doesn't seem to need curtains. I've seen him asleep on the van, his feet sticking out slightly, as if it were the mobile van's nose.

Sumana Roy
is an author and poet. Her books include *How I Became a Tree* and *Provincials*

That this seemingly innocent accoutrement of domestic life, restricting entry of the outside indoors, should have socio-economic and spiritual registers is one of the surprises of adulthood. Colour, texture, material, design, height, fold – all of these are held up for a whispered judgement about class. During the lockdown, for instance, when our curtains were made visible to the world during online meetings and discussions, I read and heard of assessments and assumptions about 'class' and 'culture', a tone-deaf display of condescension and critique. They were not perhaps aware, these critics, that their expectation of the 'beauty' of curtains owed to its original usage – its courtly life. I think of the *dhobi*'s cycle van; his court?

There's also the spiritual awareness of the curtain that might come from a kind of linguistic conditioning in the curtains of theatrical production, the stage. It's certainly this register that Rabindranath is turning to in this well-circulated poem in *Gitanjali* that begins: '*I know that the day will come when/ my sight of this earth shall be lost, and/life will take its leave in silence, drawing/the last curtain over my eyes*'. Life and death, which one is inside and which outside? 'My sight of this earth' implies that the world outside the curtained window must be life. From where is Rabindranath looking out on life, then? If 'the last curtain over my eyes' implies an entry into the residency of death, where exactly is the location of this curtain? Are we aware of this curtain, invisible but moving, as we walk through life? The poem ends with '*Let/me but truly possess the things that I/ ever spurned and overlooked*'. Is the spurning and overlooking of things and people a consequence of the curtain itself? Bukowski, in his characteristic manner, gives a humorous spin to the idea of the 'final curtain', calling it 'one of the longest running musicals ever', returning the idiom to the stage, to a life of material and viewer. Both life and death must lie somewhere between Rabindranath's 'last curtain' and Bukowski's 'final curtain'?

'*Putting up new curtains,/other windows intrude...*' This is how Ruth Stone begins her poem. I suppose we are always putting up new curtains, a kind of rehearsal for the last one.

INSCRUTABLE CHINA

Sparring superpowers, guarded India

A quiet global transformation is in the making amid protracted trade talks and a technology rift between the United States and China, the two largest economies in the world. This has consequences for the emerging world order, with spillover effects on India.

At the centre of the issue is the US goods trade deficit with China – $295.4 billion in 2024. President Donald Trump, in his 2016 election campaign, said China was "raping" the US. It needs to be noted that while China, Mexico, and Canada had massive trade surpluses with the US, the latter imposed tariffs on almost all countries. While the US-China tariff frictions are not new and have carried over from Trump's first presidential term, the current round is exposing the limitations of the US global outreach and impacting the rates of China's economic growth.

While China intensified its 'Made in China 2025' campaign of reaching self-sufficiency in key domains such as AI, electric vehicles, drones, machine learning, renewables, and space, besides diversifying trade towards Southeast Asian countries, these have also resulted in the intensification of trade frictions with the US. However, China is prepared for the emerging spat with the Trump administration in his second term. Soon after the president's Liberation Day tariff announcements in April, China began restricting magnets and rare earth metals, crucial for the US electronics, automobile, and defence industries. It also diversified soybean imports from the US to Brazil, hitting Trump's rural vote base. China thus began imposing costs on the US.

Trump had no choice but to enter protracted trade negotiations with China at Geneva on May 10-12, at London on June 9-10, at Stockholm on July 28-29, and at Madrid on September 14. Presidents Trump and Xi Jinping also spoke on the phone in June and September. The tentative agreements involved the reduction or keeping in abeyance of tariffs, market access, technology, rare earth metals, and TikTok, apart from Taiwan and the Indo-Pacific region.

Srikanth Kondapalli
The JNU Prof has been Peking behind the Bamboo Curtain for 30 years
@Sri_Kondapalli

Trump was forced to sign an extension on August 11, keeping tariffs well below the previous announcement of 145%. A three-month truce was announced till November 11 that also included no fresh tariffs on China for importing Russian oil. Trump and Xi are expected to meet at the APEC summit in South Korea this month, rekindling the prospects for an agreement.

The US has agreed to allow the AI chips of Nvidia to be exported to China. In September, China was reported to have restricted its leading tech companies from buying the chips as part of a push for domestic manufacturing. It has also declared that it will not import soybeans from the US until tariffs are removed, even though it is reported that the Trump administration is eyeing a huge deal through the sale of Boeing aircraft.

Traditional US demands such as observing WTO-led market economy principles, removal of government subsidies to state-owned enterprises and private enterprises, and curbing over-production in steel, cement, aluminium, EVs, and solar panels have been met with stoic silence in China.

On the other hand, China has also imposed many non-tariff barriers like cumbersome customs procedures, complicated licensing requirements and regulatory measures, discriminatory practices on foreign companies, and a preference for domestic industries. This has been a common complaint relevant to China's discriminatory practices and is not unique to the US firms.

The intensification of the trade and technology spat between the US and China is a symptom of the emerging power transition in the global order, escalated further by the US-Russia conflict and the emergence of a multi-polar world, as reflected in the BRICS expansion and the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation. In this context, while the US also imposed debilitating tariffs on India, as with many countries, New Delhi has not retaliated, unlike Beijing. Part of this is due to the low dependence on trade as a composition of the Indian gross domestic product, but also in deference to the two-and-a-half decades of US-India relations.

India is also concerned about the untrammelled rise of China and is aware that China has been weaponising diplomacy, economy, trade, and tourism. India has also witnessed China's restrictions on rare earth metals and tunnel-boring machines, the recall of engineers and technicians from the Foxconn mobile assembly plants, and other coercive measures.

China has a massive trade imbalance in its favour with India, and Beijing imposed debilitating non-tariff barriers on Indian products. This poses twin-pronged challenges from Beijing and Washington to New Delhi that need to be addressed cautiously.

CULTURE AND COSMOS

The new divorce: Family estrangement across generations

Shaifali Sandhya
is an international psychologist, former professor, and writer on culture, cosmopolitanism, and global affairs

Does your sibling make you mad?

At the recent WellChild Awards, Prince Harry posed this question to a participant. Once connected by shared trauma and dreams, the relationship between Princes Harry and William has significantly fractured. Although Harry's estrangement may be layered – his wife's race, disregard of the family code, geographical distance – marital choices can ignite the deepest separations.

The royal rift highlights the broader, unsettling phenomenon affecting countless families worldwide – estrangement. Recently, when his eldest son confessed over social media that he was in a long-term relationship with a woman while still legally married to another, Lalu Prasad Yadav expelled him from both their family and the Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) party.

In my 2020 book on marital disconnection, I examined how unmet expectations lead to estrangement. Over a quarter of urban Indians, one survey reveals, have cut ties with a family member. Since research on this taboo subject is scarce, the numbers could be much higher. In the US, statistics show that one in two adults is estranged from a close relative.

Estrangement manifests as the intentional severing of ties with family due to perceived slights or grievances; it is long-term and emotionally charged. Marrying outside family expectations – to someone of a different race, religion, class, or values – can heighten conflicts. Although interracial relationships are on the rise, couples like Harry and Meghan, more than same-race couples, face greater negative judgements that strain their relationships.

Yet, it is not only marriage-related clashes that drive people apart. Other ruptures can create estrangements, such as family migration, the transfer of wealth across generations, political divides, and mismatched values. When she confessed she had a boyfriend, Arundhati Roy reports her mother's fury: "The insults washed over me like a tide... Apart from the usual ones, the additional theme of course was 'whore' and 'prostitute'."

Illness, mental health issues, emotional distress, and personality traits like stubbornness or narcissism can significantly contribute to estrangement. Older adults with untreated hearing loss experience withdrawal, irritability, and reduced family support. Conditions leading to speech loss, such as strokes or Parkinson's, can foster feelings of disrespect, causing family members to lose interest in maintaining contact. For instance, Naina Mishra's mental illness, highlighted in *The Guardian*, deepened her estrangement from her mother, who felt powerless to help her daughter amid her psychosis. Many estranged families may benefit from therapeutic intervention.

For some individuals, ending relationships is not a tragedy but a means of survival. Through detachment, they can escape cycles of abuse or manipulation that familial bonds often excuse. What older generations may see as selfish individualism may also be a cultural shift: younger generations redefining healthier family boundaries and a move towards mutual respect in their chosen connections.

Estrangement is a complex issue. Family members can live separately while emotionally intertwined with unresolved issues, or they may share a home and yet feel an overwhelming sense of distance. However, every instance of estrangement tells a story of betrayal and emotional wounds, and sweeps in its dragnet friends, non-estranged relatives, neighbours, and colleagues. This dynamic can formalise fractures across generations.

Family estrangement is not a modern phenomenon; it has been woven into the human experience for millennia. Consider the story of Cain and Abel: a cautionary tale of jealousy that led to the ultimate betrayal, where one brother killed the other. The epic of the Pandavas and Kauravas in the *Mahabharata* illustrates how love can devolve into rivalry, unravelling familial bonds. These ancient narratives reveal a painful truth: the deepest wounds are inflicted not by strangers but by those closest to us.

When crucial connections meant to nurture, validate, and uplift us are severed, the repercussions are devastating. Estrangement can plunge individuals into despair, anxiety, and loneliness, undermining self-confidence and identity. The fight against family estrangement is not simply about reconnecting; it's about reclaiming one's right to love and be loved unconditionally.

Estrangement pervades cultures, rooted in deep-seated wounds like parental favouritism and sibling humiliation. Choosing to distance oneself from family may be one of the most profound moral decisions a person can make, yet it can create political fractures and influence social dynamics. The ways we relate and interact with significant others, the WHO Commission on Social Connection (2025) highlights, safeguard our health.

Across cultures, the family is idealised as a sanctuary; however, being related by blood does not guarantee a sense of belonging. In a world where walking away is all too easy, we must find the courage to reconnect. But we must recognise when reconciliation is not the answer. True acceptance and healing can sometimes lie beyond family ties.

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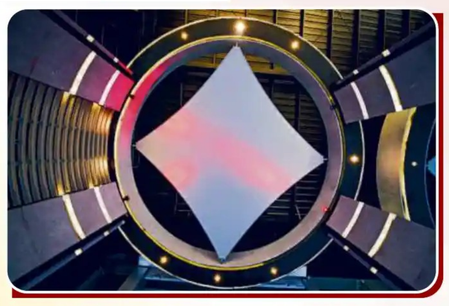

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Bean buzz in cuppa capital

In cities like Bengaluru, cafes today are more than coffee stops — they are community hubs, co-working arenas, and aspirational spaces that blend filter-kaapi nostalgia with artisanal trends, creating a vibrant new urban brew culture, writes Smitha Murthy

It's evening in Bengaluru — a musky, heavy-scented evening thick with rain and light with clouds. It's 2005, a year without smartphones, but a year of excitement for me. The then-sleepy suburb of Rajarajeshwari Nagar has a new entrant: a trendy, hip, and unbelievably cool cafe!

I wasn't a coffee drinker, but I loved cafes. Cafes were 'cool.' And I wanted to show my dad all its coolness. But retired people in their 70s didn't particularly care about coolness. He wanted coffee. South Indian filter coffee. And that the cafe didn't have. 'Try the cappuccino,' I offered, scarcely knowing what it was myself. He agreed. Once it came, he stirred it with suspicion. The coffee was creamy, its milk-coated texture dissolving with the stirring. "How is it?" I asked, as if I were the barista. "It's okay," he said. "Not strong," he added. I sat with my fancy latte, sipping it as one was supposed to. And my dad? He gulped the coffee down, just as he would if he were in a darshini.

That was the last time he went to a cafe. He still gulps his coffee down from a tumbler. It's never a latte or espresso. Always, rich filter coffee, made with just-boiled milk, sweetened with sugar, served in steel *lotas*. House-bound as he is, I wonder what my dad would think of today's cafes. What may he think of a South Indian filter coffee with condensed milk, a fusion of Vietnamese and Indian styles? Or would he enjoy the Chikmagalur single-origin coffee from a new and popular cafe? Would he grumble and say that his old haunts still make it best? Just as they did all those years ago when Bengaluru's most-loved eateries were mostly tiny places famous for their coffees and idlis?

I tried to find the answers to those questions, sipping and gulping my way through Bengaluru's growing cafe scene. As of May 2025, *namma ooru* is said to have over 700 cafes, with a large majority of them single-owned, while the rest are coffee chains. Typical spend ranges from Rs 300 to Rs 500, while premium cafes often average even more. It's estimated that the average Bengalurean eats out six to eight times a month. That number of 700-odd cafes may seem small in comparison to a city like Seoul, which is supposed to have more than 20,000 cafes, making it one of the world's most cafe-dense places. You can hardly walk 500m there without bumping into a coffee bean. But for Bengaluru, today's new-age cafes are more than just coffee stops.

These cafes serve as aspirational spaces of belonging for today's urban privileged. They form the 'third space' (not home, not office), hosting events, pop-up stalls, startup meetings, and book launches. You can still grab a cup of coffee at any of the city's 5,000-odd darshinis and gulp it down like my father. You can still go to Bengaluru's oldest cafes dotted around South Bengaluru just for a filter coffee. Or you can mingle with intellectuals at a famous haunt near M G Road. They are iconic institutions in their own right, but the newer cafes are now jostling for space, serving art, culture, and conversations with elan.

It's the vibe, silly!

At one of Bengaluru's hippest cafes, the buzz is evident even on a Wednesday afternoon. A courtyard of green and rustic charm awaits me as I navigate what seems more like a wine list than a coffee menu: Arabica coffee aged in a cask barrel, brewed over ice. A cappuccino with single-origin honey, topped with honey pollen.

Seated next to me are four young girls, presumably still in college. They seem undaunted by the prices, even though the honey cappuccino I am eyeing costs Rs 300. In another room, a 'techie' is with his laptop, on a call. Outside, overlooking the courtyard, two women wrestle with sandwiches. The space is sprawling, designed to host community events as well. It's a quirky mix of old-world heritage with new-age coffees and cocoa, packed for today's wallet-heavy youth. The pricing in such cafes can be daunting, admits Ankita Das, a young content marketer, based in Bengaluru. "Not gonna lie, paying 350 bucks for a coffee isn't always worth it. But then again, it's not just the coffee, it's the vibe. I usually end up spending Rs 500–700 at a cafe, and if the ambience feels good and the coffee holds up, I tell myself it's worth it."

Her world is not one that Savitha Narasimhan is likely to inhabit soon. In her 50s, Savitha grew up with a love for filter coffee. "My coffee drinking journey began at the age of seven! As a child, I grew up watching my mom completely relaxed while having coffee. She would be in a meditative state, and her mood used to perk up after a cup. I used to request sips, and in six months, I graduated to a whole cup of coffee! No turning back after that!" she laughs.

Savitha admits she hasn't tried too many of Bengaluru's new cafes. The very ambience, which Ankita loves, with its music and vociferous youth, doesn't attract her. The price is another deterrent. "I always prefer the filter coffee in a steel or brass *lota*/cup! It makes a difference, trust me. Cappuccino or latte is not for me. Somehow, the emotion stirred in the coffee is not present in a latte. A darshini coffee, had on the footpath, sometimes gives me more pleasure and relaxation than a latte in a coffee shop."

To linger and to connect

Ankita agrees. Despite all the cafes she frequents, she still loves the strong filter coffee served in a steel tumbler at the darshinis. The cafes are more of a mood, a way to linger and connect for her. They can also be exclusionary due to the price and ambience. "Yeah, sometimes cafes can feel a bit exclusionary. You only see a certain type of crowd there, and not everyone feels like they fit in. Darshinis, I think, on the other hand, are the opposite. Everyone goes there, no judgment, quick food, super affordable. Cafes are more about ambience while darshinis are pure function," Ankita explains. And ambience is definitely high on the menu at the next cafe I visit as part of my cafe-hopping tour of Bengaluru.

The place seems made for Instagram, complete with a hobbit cave, a curated bookstore, and dreamy outdoor seating. It's also one of the few cafes that wants to be a space to nurture communities, especially the queer community. Cafes with bookstores aren't new. Such cafes host several events almost every weekend, ranging from author panels to painting and pottery workshops.

Coffee and co-working

While such spaces take care of the cultural quotient, cafes serve another need: that of being co-working spaces for today's startups and the gig community. You can walk into any new-age cafe, and you might not just have coffee, but also launch a startup while you sip away. For instance, a coffee chain launched in 2016 and known for its co-working ambience has quickly become one of India's fastest-growing speciality coffee chains. It already has more than 160 cafes, competing in a space with other chains but differentiating itself with a focus on artisanal coffee. Its success has prompted other cafes to offer similar co-working vibes. Another cafe chain that has multiple locations across Bengaluru offers a co-working space where customers can work the whole day, even with just one order.

> Not gonna lie, paying 350 bucks for a coffee isn't always worth it. But then again, it's not just the coffee, it's the vibe. If the ambience feels good and the coffee holds up, I tell myself it's worth it.

But working from one such cafe proved to be a strangely disconcerting experience for me. I was used to cafes as a place of relaxation, and associating them with a place of work seemed contradictory. It didn't seem to matter to the folks who sat glued to a laptop. I gave up working and tried to read Jane Austen, but it was hard to linger in Regency England while the person next to me shouted about a US client.

What is it to actually work in a cafe, though? Not with a laptop but as a barista? I asked this question to Anima Nair, a neurodiversity advocate and consultant, whose son, Pranav, works as a barista at a cafe in Whitefield. "Working in a cafe has given him a sense of purpose. He takes a lot of pride in his work. He couldn't go to college, so I think this was his first ever experience of being with a general crowd instead of only autistic individuals, like he had while training and studying," Anima shares.

Pranav loves people, and creating different mocktails or coffees gives him a sense of satisfaction at the end of the day. Even though he is the only neurodivergent person in the cafe, the inclusive atmosphere has enabled him to thrive. There are other fully inclusive cafes with multiple outlets in the city, where the staff are adults with physical, intellectual or psychiatric disabilities.

Craft or filter?

And we are back to where we started. It was in Rajarajeshwari Nagar that my dad first tried his first and last cappuccino. That old cafe is no longer there. The area now has swankier cafes, including an art cafe, a bakehouse cafe, cafes with board games, co-working cafes, and, of course, even one named after the good-old filter coffee. For a quick cuppa, you can start with the filter coffee, settle down at the next one for work, and then wind up at a third to have coffee with red velvet cupcakes. Two decades ago, this kind of choice was unthinkable. Now, it seems unthinkable that there isn't a bookstore cafe or a craft coffee shop yet.

My dad may still not like these arty cafes. But there are still plenty of darshinis that will give him his beloved steel tumbler coffee. He may still gulp it down, hurriedly. But there will be another crowd that will also make its way to a cafe, armed with laptops and books, and settle down ready to order their favourite mocha latte, a bagel or two, and Wi-Fi to while those long hours away. It's here, in this curious city where a darshini can jostle next to a fancy cafe, that we know that the past is always racing towards the future.

Slow down and espresso!

There is nothing extraordinary in my daily routine. Yet, every sip I take feels like an act of defiance, writes Simran Ahuja

Afternoons have an almost Pavlovian effect on me. When the clock strikes three, the neurons in my brain dimly light up. All roads lead to a steaming, swirling cup of coffee.

Reports estimate that approximately 2.25 billion cups of coffee are consumed worldwide daily. Clearly, there's nothing extraordinary in this daily routine of mine. And yet, every slow sip I take of my velvety, creamy cappuccino feels almost like an act of defiance.

In a world where caffeine is associated with productivity or energy (fun fact: it's now common to have a coffee rave, where people gather together in the wee hours of the morning and party alongside coffee instead of alcohol), I turn to coffee to slow down and drown out the sounds of the ever-ticking clock.

But this approach to coffee has taken a long time to brew. It needed both time and a cross-continental move, to be specific.

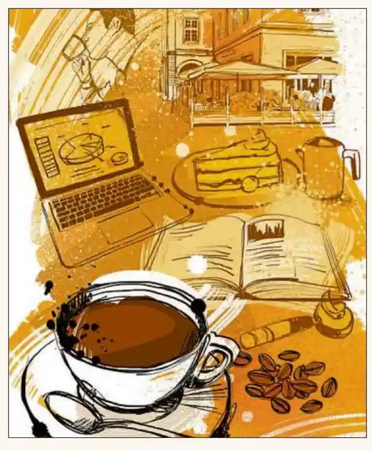
India, particularly the south, takes its filter coffee seriously. I've spent one too many evenings at work at a Darshini close by, watching in awe as the person behind the counter deftly keeps track of every order, every heavy pot of boiling milk, every request for extra sugar or extra strong (or light in my case) coffee. It was always trance-inducing to watch the dark, dirt-like decoction turn a rich chocolatey brown when milk was poured in. The first sip went straight to my heart and then to my deadline-frazzled brain. But all too soon, the little glass would be empty, and it was time to head back to the sharp white lights of the office.

The Swedes do this differently. Fika, as they call it, is as much a verb as a noun. A successful fika is sweet. Not just from the sugary cinnamon or cardamom bun that accompanies it as a rule. You see, the Swedes learned early on that coffee with some company is essential to stretch a moment. The drink here is incidental, the focus being an intentional pause to just be present, or to just be.

My first fika in Gothenburg gave me a taste of what I was missing out on. The table was crowded with cardamom knots, chocolate balls and cookies. Seconds turned into minutes, which then turned into an hour, and we lingered long after the coffee and every last pastry crumb was gone.

Work, clearly, could wait. There were finer things and fikas to be experienced in life. And I couldn't agree more.

Not long after, Germans taught me another way of slowing down with coffee. Afternoon 'kaffes' here are incomplete without their 'kuchen'. To an Indian who grew up associating cake with dessert, it was initially strange seeing people around me enjoy coffee with generous slices of apfelstrudel (apple



strudel), bienenstich (a honey, almond and custard-filled "bee sting" cake), or the famous schwarzwalder kirschtorte — a black forest cherry cake that is just as much a mouthful to pronounce as it is to greedily devour. Similar to fika, Bavaria's kaffee und kuchen also has a strong social aspect connected to it: Kaffeeklatsch or coffee gossip. And everyone here knows, a good story can't be rushed.

If Germans enjoy their afternoon coffee with cake, Italians are the opposite. In Rome, it's not uncommon to see people order espressos after dinner. Besides the belief that the acidity in coffee can aid digestion, the drink also serves as a way to linger just a bit longer at the table.

From India to Italy, and Gothenburg to Germany, drinking coffee isn't just an unthinking force of habit. This small act takes on a whole new meaning, becoming both ritualistic and rhythmical in its daily repetition. Different countries have their versions of it, but they all agree: Coffee is more than caffeine.

So now, when the clock strikes three, I make my daily pilgrimage to a coffee machine, knowing that I don't know how to make time stand still. But I do know how to enjoy a cappuccino. For now, that is enough.

DO YOU HAVE A COFFEE STORY TO SHARE?

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ASTROSPEAK
Guruji Shrii Arnav

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Bestselling author R F Kuang's latest novel is clever enough to elevate fantasy to a bubbling art form but the writing is uneven and overwrought, says Nandita Bose

A profound but puerile ride to hell

The protagonist of the novel, Alice, scours the depths of hell in search of Prof Grimes, who gets blown up and "his eyeballs stretch out of his face", among other horrors. (PIC FOR REPRESENTATION)

With a CV that includes Cambridge, Oxford, and Yale, RF Kuang epitomises that stereotyped Asian overachiever who's accomplished what few have, and made herself an international personage through her books, particularly Yellowface, which tore masks off the publishing industry. In Katabasis, she labours with the hypothesis: "Hell is a campus."

Imagine, the Hogwarts lot make it to grad school with wide-eyed wonder, evolved vocabularies and kawaii minds in pursuit of doctoral theses in the field of Magick while their advisor, Nobel Laureate Prof Grimes, manages to combine Snape, Umbridge and Voldemort and still offers villainy trademarked as his own.

Also, Prof Grimes manages to get blown up. "No one saw Professor Grimes's eyeballs stretch out of his face before popping like grapes; his intestine pulling out and around his body like a jump rope, criss-cross Applesauce; his mouth twisting in a soundless scream... No one saw his brains on the chalkboard; the toothy jaw fragment landing plop into his afternoon cup of that chilling Darjeeling."

From such delightful beginnings, Alice Law, our protagonist, sets off to scour the depths of hell to revive Prof Grimes, as but for his intervention, she has zero job prospects. Prof Grimes is a smug, narcissistic bastard, and there's no chance in hell he's in the other place, yet Alice is practical and needs his nod to wrap up her thesis.

On the brink of diving into a pristine pentagram with chalk, Lembas bread, a perpetual flask and Proust for reading material, she is persuaded by the department demigod Peter Murdoch to permit him to tag along. Perhaps two heads and all, or because they are ex-lovers, or simply to further this story, she concedes.

R F Kuang. (PIC COURTESY: AMAZON)

And thus begins the chronicle of a journey to hell. "Hell, she had read, was an inconstant and shifting plane. Its landmarks were conceptual, not fixed."

Hell disappoints in reality. It has night and day, as in the plane of the living. The passage of time is relayed in hours, and cell phones work. Why wouldn't they? Also, the landscape is monotonous, predictable. It is, at least parts of it, Cambridge. Hell is quite like their "pizza anus" map.

An occupational hazard among women writers is that the men they dream up are so perfect they can only be fiction. So, there's this overdone trope of a faltering, messed-up woman with the towering intellectual giant by her side to absorb the shocks of their underworld journey. "One step, then two, and then he broke into a run. Alice darted forth. They collided. Peter's arms wrapped around her, and hers around him. He was so radiantly warm, so alive and solid. She burst into tears." Peter Murdoch exudes such green flag energy that he himself turns colourless; a provider of clues to the gaps in Alice's knowledge, a prop.

The biggest dilemma of the book though is extrinsic.

Who is this book pitched to? In tone and in content, the 13-17 age group. Like Percy Jackson introduces Greek myths to younger readers, this does the same for foundational studies in humanities via Plato, Kant, Bentham and Nietzsche; there's even a cat named Archimedes. A mainstream book by a bestselling author, so its tenor, material and ambition are discomfiting, at an internecine war within. An immature tale of lovers a la Eurydice and Orpheus: onto this shaky foundation is piled arcane texts that circulate only in the hallowed circles of academia.

Besides, there's this burning need, this desire to vilify the institutions of learning while using material from her role within it. Although, come to think of it, which grad student hasn't visualised her guide in an everlasting bonfire?

Despite its flaws, it is a clever little book that elevates fantasy to a bubbling art form. "But magicians lived in the air, dancing on a tentative staircase of ideas, and it was a source of endless delirium, to know that the instant the world began to bore you, you could snap your fingers, and you'd be in free-fall once again."

Editing is a forgotten art, and we're given verbose, unedited books with ramblings and inchoate thought-fragments, interspersed with gems of brilliance. Notes make it to the mainframe of the book.

These flaws notwithstanding, Katabasis is a bipolar work: it shows deep erudition, quoting from the best human knowledge can aspire to, while being wrapped in juvenile prose, and in the language of the Gen Zers, almost 'cringe'.

Alice just has to find the Dialetheia, exchange it for Grimes' soul with Lord Yama and return. In the end, she abandons all for the most important, for what matters: love.

At its heart, Katabasis is a youthful romp posing as Dante's Inferno, written in an overwrought Lemony Snickett style. Perhaps hell is also wading through 545 pages of uneven, overwrought writing that could easily have been 300, of the most pertinent and elegant bits.

In short, Kuang's writing is a mix of profound and puerile, a paradox.

KATABASIS
R F Kuang
HarperVoyager, pp 560, Rs 699

Where talk sparkles but story stumbles

Quirky details and witty dialogues cannot save this novel from its sluggish narrative that undermines its many strengths, writes Caitlin Lester

The cover of Alice Sees Ghosts is misleading — it displays the enticing information that author Daisy Rockwell is a recipient of the International Booker Prize — a confusing proposition, considering Alice Sees Ghosts reads like an airport novel, albeit an eccentric one with luminous details and undeniably excellent dialogue.

In fact, Rockwell, an American, won the prize for her translation of the 2022 International Booker winner, Tomb of Sand, by Hindi-language writer Geetanjali Shree. It appears that being an award-winning translator is not an automatic qualification for being an author of the same calibre. The premise of the story is as follows: while staying in the beloved Massachusetts home of her dying grandmother, Nanette, Alice begins to see the ghost of her long-dead grandfather. He sets Alice the task of ensuring that certain wrongs are righted following the reading of Nanette's will. Alice is accompanied on this undertaking by her handsome and long-suffering Indian fiancé, Ronit, who was formerly her psychiatrist during a period when she refused to speak. Spoiler alert — at one point, they end up in India.

The opening line shows promise for an intriguing read: "Nowadays, when Alice spoke, she often noted confusion on the faces of her interlocutors. I must still be speaking written language, she thought, but was not terribly concerned." This is just the first of many delightfully specific and idiosyncratic details, such as: Ronit's incongruous obsession with ice skating; Alice's alcoholic mother rereading the complete works of Anthony Trollope while drunk on a chaise longue; Alice unpatriotically closing her eyes as she drives through toll plazas draped in USA flags.

It's quirky in a way that could be grating, yet succeeds by being grounded in crisp prose and a matter-of-fact narrative voice.

However, as the book progresses, although the eccentric flourishes continue thick and fast, somewhere around chapter five, the initial gloss fades; one can sense the author behind the scenes hastening her characters through a thin and linear narrative, spoon-feeding plot points with little finesse.

ALICE SEES GHOSTS
Daisy Rockwell
Bloomsbury, pp 272, Rs 699

The sentences no longer feel pleasingly sparse, but instead stiff and predictable. Rockwell favours a declarative structure with the subject coming first in a sentence, but one wishes she would take the scenic route occasionally. The chapters end abruptly, sometimes in a strained attempt at gravitas or a cliffhanger, and at other times seemingly arbitrarily.

Rockwell also tends to zoom the audience in and out of the action erratically, sometimes tightly focused on a blow-by-blow account of the sipping of tea or the brushing of crumbs from clothes, sometimes skimming over scenes at breakneck pace. This has a distancing effect whereby it seems that nothing really matters; neither the crumbs nor the quest are of consequence.

It also leads to potentially interesting details being glossed over. For example, Ronit "expresses appropriate sympathy" to Nanette's nurse about the challenges she has faced as a single mother. We are left wondering what he said — and whether it was, in fact, appropriate. This lazy writing is surprising, because if there's one thing Rockwell excels at, it's dialogue, which is razor sharp and does a lot of the 'showing' in a book where the 'telling' is otherwise prevalent. "Do you think he'd be less helpful if he thought I was crazy?" asks the chronically naive Alice before a visit to her lawyer. Rockwell has a knack for building complicated and convincing characters. Alice is at turns strong-willed and flaky, eccentric and muted, in a way that manages to feel cohesive.

Clare, Alice's alcoholic mother, is a multifaceted and realistic portrait of a woman suffering from borderline personality disorder, although this is never made explicit. A fast-paced train-wreck of a scene featuring Clare at Christmas dinner is a highlight of the book, correctly paced and rivetingly awful. Unfortunately, quirky details and witty dialogues can't save a book from a plodding narrative voice that tends to undermine its many strengths. It is rare to encounter such contradictions within a book, and the combination can make for a frustrating read. However, if you are a reader more interested in plot and description than the finer mechanics of fiction, and think you'd enjoy an offbeat 'airport novel', maybe this is a book for you.

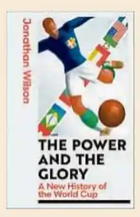
Daisy Rockwell with the International Booker Prize. (PIC COURTESY: THE BOOKER PRIZES)

BOOKRACK

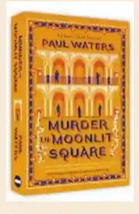
A GUARDIAN AND A THIEF
Megha Majumdar
Penguin, pp 224, Rs 699
Set in a near-future Kolkata, India, ravaged by climate change and food scarcity, the story follows two families seeking to protect their children and must battle each other to do so.

THE COST OF A PROMISED AFTERLIFE
Priyamvada Mehra
S&S, pp 328, Rs 699
This memoir exposes how cults take root in a nation of 1.4 billion, and how godmen wield unchecked power. Deeply intersectional in its lens, it lays bare the psychological and physical toll of being led into blind faith as a girl.

EVERY SPIRAL OF FATE
Tahereh Mafi
Electric Monkey, pp 480, Rs 599
At long last, the wedding day has arrived. The Jinn queen and the enigmatic ruler of Tulan are to be married in a magical, enchanted ceremony but Cyrus is falling ever more deeply in love with the one person oath-bound to kill him.



THE POWER AND THE GLORY
Jonathan Wilson
Hachette, pp 608, Rs 1,299
There has never been a comprehensive history of the World Cup that has considered not only the matches and goals but has also placed the tournaments within a socio-political framework. This book tells its definitive history.



MURDER IN MOONLIT SQUARE
Paul Waters
Penguin, pp 320, Rs 550
Witty, atmospheric, and refreshingly original, this novel introduces a quirky new detective duo readers will not forget.

THAT ONE BOOK

Echoes and sorrows beneath Monet's sky

Eva Figes crafted impressionistic prose that illuminated memory, grief and beauty, but sadly, she is not as widely read as her contemporaries, writes Saudha Kasim

Claude Monet's 'In the Garden, the Artist's Family', oil on canvas (1875). (PIC COURTESY: WIKIMEDIA/CHRISTIE'S)

We live in a luminous cloud of changing light, a sort of envelope. That is what I have to catch," says Claude Monet towards the end of a lunch with his family in Eva Figes' slim marvel of a novel, Light.

He makes this remark to the art critic Octave Mirbeau, who has dropped by his house in Giverny. Figes' book, which describes the progress of a summer day in 1900 at Giverny, where Monet lived and worked till his death, was first published in 1983.

Figes adopts an impressionistic style with her prose — we start with Monet awakening, before sunrise: "It looked good to him, the dark just beginning to fade slightly, midnight blue-black growing grey and misty, through which he could make out the last light of a dying star. It looked good to him, a calm pre-dawn hush without a breath of wind, and not a shadow of cloud in the high, clear sky." Figes builds a picture of the great artist and his family gradually, till we are in the thick of the goings-on at Giverny.

Reading Light is not unlike gazing, rapt, at one of my favourite impressionist paintings, Monet's Summer.

Stay long enough in front of that picture and you can feel the heat of the sun, the dry grasses, and almost hear the chittering of insects on a summer day. Immerse yourself in Figes' narrative and you are amongst the high emotions and secret hopes and deeply etched griefs of Monet's wife, his children and grandchildren.

The household we are introduced to is weighed down with loss — the year before, Monet's stepdaughter, Suzanne, had died. Her mother, Alice, Monet's second wife, is still mourning the loss of her child. Suzanne's two children, Lily and Jimmy, are the youngest residents in the house.

We also get to know Monet's and Alice's other children from their previous marriages — Jean-Pierre, Michel, Germaine, and Marthe. Figes slowly and surely brings the characters of these men and women to life — an astonishing achievement considering the brevity of the book. Everyone is given due consideration (including the househelps) and their relationship to Monet coloured in and contextualised with deft precision.

A time for revival?

As is the case with most literary works that explore the lives of characters through the course of a day, nothing much happens in the moment. The past casts its shadow on the present, and Figes, in a breathtaking leap in the last chapter, gives us a view of the future of Giverny.

Figes' ability to describe in the most minimal of text the gardens and ponds and surrounding countryside conveys a range of emotions within just a few sentences. Consider the thoughts of the Abbé Touissant who drops by the house during lunch and walks back to the village afterwards:

"It had been a good spring and summer, but he contemplated the harvest to come with mixed feelings: it reminded him too much of death, of smoke in the air, leaves turning yellow, bleak winter days with a mist on the horizon and a grey sky stretching to infinity. Cold months during which he was dismally conscious of his own crop growing in the soil round the church, each year bringing more headstones and high grey crosses, stark as the leafless trees."

Figes, who was born to a Jewish family in Germany in 1932 and fled to Britain as a refugee in 1939, was renowned in her lifetime as a feminist and critic.

While appreciation for her works does appear now and then in some corners of the literary world, she isn't as widely read today as some of her contemporaries. It's probably time for a revival, and there can be no better introduction to her writing than the luminous Light.

That One Book *is a monthly column that does exactly what it says — it takes up one great classic and tells you why it is (still) great.*

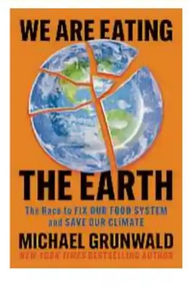
The author is a writer and communications professional. She blogs at saudha.substack.com

READ OF THE WEEK

Humanity has cleared a land mass the size of Asia plus Europe to grow food, and our food system generates a third of our carbon emissions. By 2050, we're going to need a lot more calories to fill nearly 10 billion bellies, but we can't feed the world without frying it if we keep tearing down an acre of rainforest every six seconds. We are eating the earth, and the greatest challenge facing our species will be to slow our relentless expansion of farmland into nature.

In this rollicking, shocking narrative, Grunwald shows how the world, after decades of ignoring the climate problem at the centre of our plates, has pivoted to making it worse, embracing solutions that sound sustainable but could make it even harder to grow more food with less land. But he also tells the stories of the dynamic scientists and entrepreneurs pursuing real solutions. It's an often infuriating saga of lobbyists, politicians, and even the scientific establishment making terrible choices for humanity, but it's also a hopeful account of the people figuring out what needs to be done — and trying to do it.

Michael Grunwald is the bestselling author of two widely acclaimed books, The Swamp and The New New Deal. He's a former staff writer for *The Washington Post*, *Time*, and *Politico*.



The seen and the unseen

Sumana Chandrashekar examines stereotypes in the world of Karnatik percussion to realise that women are either exoticised or erased from the scene

Among the many questions I have pursued as a student of Karnatik music, is the question of gender. I have always been interested in how notions of gender get constructed, perpetuated and enacted within the field of Karnatik music.

The reason I started to engage with this question is because I grew up in a pretty much gender-neutral home. My parents insisted that all chores had to be done by everyone. My brother and I grew up without once being told 'girls do this' and 'boys do that'. Therefore, when I stepped into the larger world of Karnatik music, I discovered that reality was quite different. Deeply embedded gender stereotypes became apparent to me in the most stark manner. In over 20 years of my training as a Karnatik vocalist, I observed how, in many music classes, girls were asked to keep all gesticulations to the bare minimum, contain the expressiveness of the body so as to not take up too much space, and to ensure that tala is tapped on the lap with 'girl-like' gentleness. There were also strict caveats on how girls and boys must dress for the stage.

The legendary M S Subbulakshmi was known to be adept at the mridangam too, although she never seems to have played it in public. DH ARCHIVES

Many people around Sumana were startled by her choice of a percussion instrument.

This question around gender took on another dimension when, in 2009, I started learning the ghatam under Sukanya Ramgopal, India's first woman ghatam player. Many people around me were startled by my choice of a percussion instrument and that too a ghatam, which is anyway considered only a sub-accompanying instrument. A melodic instrument – perhaps a veena or violin – would have been better, they felt. Subsequently, I learnt from my guru that in her illustrious career spanning over four decades, I had been her first woman student. To have that privilege has been humbling for me to this day. But why did she have to wait for so many years to find a woman student became a pressing and urgent question for me. On the one hand, vocal music classrooms were mostly filled with girls; on the other hand, the world of percussion seemed to be dominated by men. It was this puzzle that led me back into history to understand how the idea and infrastructure of Karnatik music as we know today was created nearly a century ago.

Gender stereotyping

The process of gender stereotyping, with its main focus on essentialising women's bodies, has a long and complex history across the world. We don't have to go too far to understand this. If we were to look at everyday lives around us, we can easily see how the capitalist economy constructs gender ideas for us. Advertisements that show cars and bikes or mountaineering invariably portray men, while ads for cosmetics, domestic cleaning or kitchen appliances almost always show women. Adding to this is our system of education. In 2024, the think tank, Center for Global Development, published a report that analysed the content of school textbooks in India, stressing the high incidence of gender stereotypes in the use of language and imagery in educational materials. The study confirms that even today, in most of our textbooks, mothers are largely represented in their domestic spaces, while fathers are depicted in 'respectable' professions as doctors or engineers.

What has happened in Karnatik music over the past century is an outcome of these same processes. In the first half of the 20th century, when India as a new nation was taking birth, there was a dire need for it to have its own 'classical' arts.

A complex set of socio-political-cultural processes coalesced to 'sanitise' certain art forms of their legacies and to accord them the high pedestal of the 'classical'. Among the many ramifications of this process was the bifurcation and gendering of melody and percussion; from then on, it became common for girls and women to train in vocal music or in melodic instruments such as violin and veena, while percussion became almost exclusively a male preserve.

Sukanya Ramgopal, India's first woman ghatam player. DH FILE PHOTO

Karnatik music training tradition

So does that mean that Karnatik music training used to be different before this? Most likely, yes. A holistic pedagogy included the practice of singing and dancing, and learning a stringed instrument and a percussion instrument. Many women commonly played percussion at that time, as they always have since medieval times. Murals and paintings that we find across India testify to this. In fact, contemporaries of the legendary M S Subbulakshmi remind us that she was proficient in playing the mridangam too, although she never seems to have played in public. However, given the image of M S that we all carry today, can we even imagine her sitting with her mridangam, without being mildly startled? Like M S, were there many other percussion-playing women who may have never played publicly? Or, were they ever allowed to play in public? I often ask myself this — is documented history hiding something from us?

If erasures of women's histories – wholly or partly – is on one side, there is the exoticising of women's bodies on the other. There have been massive percussion ensembles without the presence of a single woman artist; and there are women's percussion ensembles that are unabashedly framed for the male gaze. Both are deeply problematic.

To essentialise women's bodies or for that matter any body, is not just patriarchy's suppression of their immense potential; it is, in my view, a huge disservice we do to the art form itself by limiting its expanse and shrinking the possibilities of diverse voices and varied creative expressions.

What is of course reassuring for me is that there are women in the Karnatik space today, both from cities and small towns, who continue to learn and play percussion.

On good days, the algorithm gods on social media uncover for me a video of a young girl or a woman playing the mridangam, khanjira, thavil or ghatam. More often than not, the artist is unnamed. As a society we are often content watching videos that say 'amazing !! girl playing percussion' or some such tag. To begin with, let us acknowledge that this is where both erasure and exoticising begin.

(The author has just published Song of the Clay Pot: My Journey with the Ghatam with Speaking Tiger Books.)

Join Priyan R Naik in exploring Lisbon's rich Indian connections, from Vasco da Gama's adventures to monuments that speak of the shared history between Portugal and India

Echoes of India in Lisbon

Although Lisbon is a vibrant city, with its glorious climate, lively nightlife, and historic monuments blending traditional heritage with striking modernism, I was intrigued by how the Indian connection is woven into the tapestry of Portuguese history. Names like Vasco da Gama and Afonso de Albuquerque have long been familiar in India, dating back to the 1500s — well before the British made their mark!

Lisbon did not disappoint. Its most emblematic square, the Praça do Comércio (Square of Commerce), located on the Tagus Estuary, showcases the Casa da Índia (India House), an administrative building that once housed the central authority for managing Portugal's overseas territories during the height of the Portuguese Empire. The Casa was the central shipment point and clearinghouse for trade between Portugal and its colonies in Africa, Asia, and the Americas.

The Praça do Comércio is a large, rectangular square with symmetrical buildings arranged in a "U" shape, opening towards the river. At its centre stands the impressive equestrian statue of King José I of Portugal, flanked by two large towers. It's a perfect spot to absorb the historical significance of Lisbon, though it's also a lively hub with modern cafés and shops. Today, the square remains an important transportation hub, where I boarded my tram to the Belem district, a relaxed area on the Tagus River filled with landmarks that celebrate Portugal's seafaring past.

Just a short ride from here, you'll find the Afonso de Albuquerque Square, right in front of the Belem Palace, the residence of the President of Portugal. Named after the second Governor of Portuguese India, the square features a bronze statue of Afonso de Albuquerque, along with exhibits about his life. Surprisingly, Albuquerque was quite popular in India among his soldiers and the local population, thanks to his commitment to justice. He allowed people of different religious communities to retain their laws and representatives, encouraged his men to marry local women, and granted them land and dowries. His policies helped Goa thrive as the capital of the Portuguese State of India until its liberation in 1961. A short stroll further brings you to the Jeronimos Monastery, with some of the most beautiful cloisters in the world, a Unesco World Heritage site, and the most impressive symbol of Portugal's erstwhile power and wealth.

A cancelled stamp featuring explorer Vasco da Gama.

The Portuguese seaman's tomb in Jeronimos Monastery.

Lisbon's cityscape at dusk.

A momentous night

It was here in Belem, in 1497, that Vasco da Gama spent his last night on land before embarking on his historic journey to India. The church at Jeronimos was eventually built to commemorate the safe return of Vasco da Gama and his men, with wealth pouring in from the Indian spice trade. The monastery's grand structures were funded by the riches of the East.

The lower choir of the church is the final resting place of Vasco da Gama himself, famous for establishing the sea route to India and later becoming the Portuguese Viceroy of India. His tomb has become a patriotic shrine, akin to a national pantheon. While at the monastery, make sure to sample the Pastel de Nata — a Portuguese egg tart pastry dusted with cinnamon. It was first created by monks at the monastery using leftover egg yolks, which were in abundance because the nuns used egg whites to starch their habits. The descendants of the monks who created the recipe still run a business selling these delectable treats today.

Just across Avenida da India from the monastery stands the Belem Tower, another Unesco World Heritage monument and a symbol of Lisbon. Built at the mouth of the Tagus River, this small fort once guarded the city from seafaring raiders and served as the first sight of home for returning Portuguese sailors who had rounded the Cape of Good Hope on their way to India. The lower floors of the tower housed a prison, while the middle floors stored ammunition and armaments. The top floor offers stunning views of the river and intricate carvings, giving a glimpse into Lisbon's maritime past.

Belem Tower symbolises Portugal's maritime and colonial power in early modern Europe.

The Jeronimos Monastery. PHOTO BY AUTHOR

Shades of Goa's Fontainhas

Looking out over the river, I realised that the Portuguese colonists must have felt at home in Panjim (now Panaji), with its own river, the Mandovi, resembling Lisbon's Tagus.

The narrow streets of Panaji's Fontainhas neighbourhood, with its whitewashed churches, tiny shops, and inviting restaurants, mimic Lisbon's Alfama district, famous for its winding alleys and vibrant cultural life. Alfama is best explored on foot, but when I grew weary, I hopped onto one of Lisbon's iconic trams or funiculars, which wind through the city's oldest quarters — Alfama, Bairro Alto, and Baixa. The narrow roads are filled with souvenir shops, tiny bars, and cafés, where I enjoyed a hearty Portuguese meal accompanied by fado, the haunting style of music inspired by the sorrow of sailors' wives.

One monument that's visible from nearly every corner of the city is the Castelo de São Jorge (Saint George's Castle), a Moorish hilltop fortification with stone walls. The castle has one significant Indian connection: it was here that Vasco da Gama was received by King Manuel in 1499, after he voyaged to India, in the underground chambers of the Alcaçovas Palace — only remnants of which remain today. Walking through the castle's corridors, viewing antiques and artefacts, and climbing the towers for panoramic views reminded me of just how remarkable Lisbon is. It's no surprise that it's considered one of the most beautiful cities in the world.

Towards the end of my trip, however, I had one regret — no one I spoke to in Lisbon seemed to have heard of Goa, or appeared to care. Despite the shared history and the indelible connections between Portugal and India, that knowledge seemed lost on the younger generations.

The famous arch at the Praça do Comércio.

Which cooking oil should you pick for deep frying? What are the benefits of cold-pressed oils? Should you opt for olive oil or avocado oil? Ranjini Rao answers all your cooking oil conundrums

Spilling facts about COOKING OIL

Years ago, while travelling around the Midwest in the US, we checked into a Bed and Breakfast (B&B), a room with a sparingly stocked little blue kitchen, paisley printed tableware and linen, where I was only happy to plug in my rice cooker and stir up a pulao. My supplies lasted a couple of days and then we were at the mercy of the quaint store in town, which sold everything from wipes and toilet rolls to fruit pops and soda. I picked up whatever came close to familiar — onions, garlic, canned beans, salad vegetables, apples, and for oil, the only one they had on the shelves: grapeseed oil, which, as I recollect, made a stellar salad dressing.

Ranjini Rao

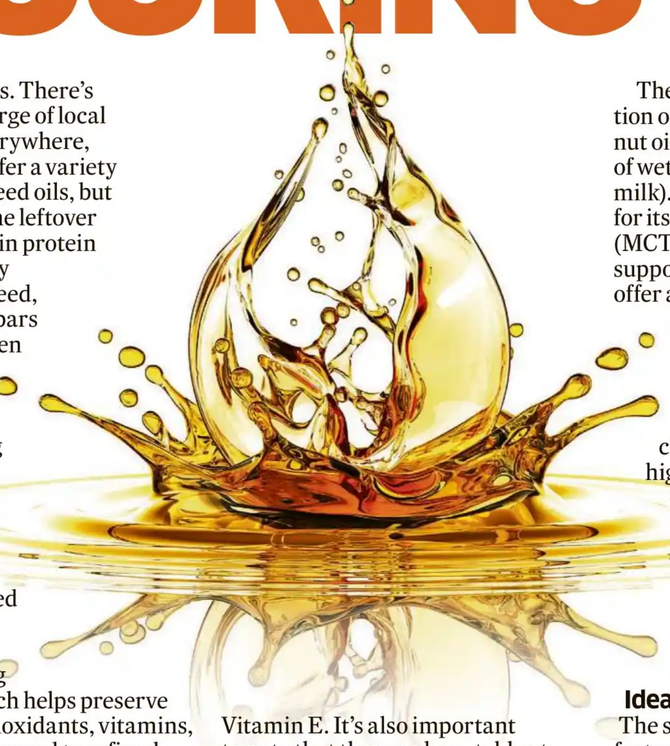
Today, I cook exclusively with coconut oil, with the occasional few cups of groundnut oil for deep-frying. For salads, I use olive oil, and for dosaes and idlis with chutney pudi, the quintessential sesame oil. Of course, being a bi-cultural family, we also stock mustard oil, which goes into the postos and jhaal muris.

THE GREENTHEORY

There's a lot of noise on the best oil to use in everyday cooking lately, and in our quest for sustainable choices that honour local traditions and modern health wisdom, choosing the right oil plays a key role.

Cold-pressed oils: nutrient-rich & sustainable

Cold-pressed oil extraction uses mechanical pressing without heat or solvents, and is said to be effective in preserving antioxidants, vitamin E, beta carotene, and natural flavour, unlike refined oils. There's been a sudden surge of local oil presseries everywhere, which not only offer a variety of local nut and seed oils, but also repurpose the leftover grain cakes, rich in protein and fibre, in many ways: as animal feed, compost, health bars and snacks, or even fuel, embracing sustainability by minimising waste.



Virgin oils: everyday use

Virgin oils are typically extracted from seeds, nuts, or fruits without chemical refining or high heat, which helps preserve their natural antioxidants, vitamins, and flavour. Compared to refined oils, both virgin and cold-pressed oils are generally considered healthier because they retain beneficial compounds like polyphenols and Vitamin E. It's also important to note that they are less stable at very high temperatures, so they are best used for sautéing, stir-frying, in salads, and to add finishing touches to dishes rather than deep-frying.

There's a whole load of information on how to consume virgin coconut oil (especially one that's a result of wet processing of coconut flesh or milk). Virgin coconut oil is known for its medium-chain triglycerides (MCTs), which may aid metabolism, support gut and brain health, and offer antioxidant and antimicrobial properties.

Clinical studies show that consuming around 30 ml everyday can raise HDL (good) cholesterol. However, it is also high in saturated fat and may elevate LDL (bad) cholesterol, and studies suggest it's not ideal for heart health if used excessively. And this is where grandma's wisdom comes in — use it in moderation.

Ideal oil for deep frying

The smoke point of an oil is a key factor in deciding its stability and use. If the oil starts breaking down and gives off smoke easily, it releases unhealthy compounds. Generally, an oil with a high smoke point (ideally 190°C) is best for deep-frying.

- Refined coconut oil has a smoke point above 200°C, whereas unrefined or virgin coconut oil has a low smoke point, of about 175°C.
- Refined groundnut oil is also a good option, with a high smoke point of around 210°C, while cold-pressed groundnut oil has a smoke point of 160°C.

Again, use traditional wisdom when it comes to this; don't heat the oil at extreme high on the gas stove, and don't re-use heated oil more than once.

Safflower, sunflower, seed oils: nutrients & stability

Safflower and sunflower oils are high in polyunsaturated fats; they are suited for medium-heat cooking but prone to oxidation if overheated. Light sesame oil has a balanced fatty acid profile and a high smoke point, making it good for sautéing and stir-frying.

Avocado, grapeseed, olive oils: good alternatives?

Avocado oil is rich in MUFAs and offers a high smoke point, at 270°C, making it a healthy and versatile choice for high-heat cooking. Grapeseed oil, while neutral in flavour, rich in polyunsaturates, is better for raw and cold applications like dressings, and not deep frying. Olive oil, especially extra-virgin, is considered heart-healthy, being high in MUFAs and antioxidants, and is ideal for low to medium heat.

(Ranjini is a communications professor, author, and podcaster, straddling many other worlds, in Bengaluru. She's passionate about urban farming and sustainable living, and can mostly be found cooking and baking in her little kitchen, where, surrounded by heirloom coffee kettles and mismatched tea cups, she finds her chi.)

Palm oil: Why it's problematic

Palm oil is consumed widely in India, but over 90 per cent of it is imported. It is known to be heat-stable and neutral, helping enhance the shelf-life of snacks, but raises environmental red flags, due to deforestation, biodiversity loss, and questionable labour practices in countries where it is widely produced. It is high in saturated fat, making it unappealing from both green and health standpoints.

Avocado oil is a healthy option for high-heat cooking.

Sunflower oil is used for medium-heat cooking.

Simple hacks

- **No-heat topping:** Rather than heating mustard oil for tadka, add a teaspoon of cold-pressed mustard oil or sesame oil to add a burst of flavour to dals (mainly masoor or moong dals).
- **Coconut-ginger stir-fry:** Heat up some virgin coconut oil, sauté ginger, curry leaves and once cool, store it for about a week in an airtight container. Add this to your vegetable side dishes for extra flavour.
- **Avocado-olive dressing:** Mix extra-virgin olive oil with mashed avocado, lemon juice, and a dollop of mustard for a creamy salad topper.
- **Asian salad:** Slice up some cucumbers, raw papaya and carrots, put them in a glass jar/ bottle, add a drizzle each of grapeseed oil, sesame oil, lemon, toss in some chaat masala, rock salt and jaggery powder, close the lid and shake it up. Let it rest in the fridge. Add this to your bigger salads with lettuce, onions and tomatoes for a refreshing crunch.

Olive oil is ideal for low or medium-heat cooking.

Discarding & reusing oils: smart practices

The one big lesson I've learned about discarding used oil – never pour it down the drain, it can clog pipes and harm the system. Here are a few ways to manage this problem:

- Let it cool, then store it in a well-sealed container and discard along with your trash.
- If the quantity is small, mix it with materials like waste, shredded paper, sawdust or sand, and then dispose it.
- Avoid reusing it as repeated heating produces harmful compounds, including trans fats, and increases health risks like heart disease, diabetes, and more commonly, inflammation.

Reusing cooking oil may not only affect its smoke point but also lead to release of toxins.

Excessive smartphone use in early childhood hampers emotional, cognitive, and social growth. Tuhin Mukherjee shares corrective parenting strategies

Screen time: How much is too much

In today's digital age, smartphones have become an inseparable part of our lives — and for children, this dependency begins early. Parents often hand over devices with the best intentions: to entertain, distract, or help their kids learn. However, the long-term effects are often overlooked.

Smartphone use in early childhood is reshaping a generation in ways we are just beginning to understand. The risks are not intentional, but stem from convenience and well-meaning parenting.

PIC FOR REPRESENTATION PURPOSE ONLY

How it started

A common scene is a toddler absorbed in a phone while parents cook, clean, or manage work. While this may seem harmless, it replaces essential human interaction and exploration — key components of brain development — with passive screen time. A child who turns to a screen for comfort rather than interacting with their parent or peers may struggle with emotional regulation and social skills.

Studies show that excessive screen time before the age of five can hinder language development, reduce attention span, and delay cognitive milestones.

The brain develops best through interaction with people, nature, and objects, not screens. Often, parents inadvertently create a cycle by using smartphones as rewards: "Finish your food, and you get the phone." Over time, this transforms into a coping mechanism. What begins as a bribe can soon become a demand for every minor discomfort or boredom.

This behaviour encourages instant gratification and reduces the child's ability to handle frustration or engage in creative play. As a result, traditional childhood activities like outdoor exploration are replaced by virtual ones. While technology is inevitable, there is a clear distinction between healthy screen exposure and overuse.

The hidden dangers

Unrestricted smartphone access can expose children to violent content, unrealistic beauty standards, cyberbullying, and online predators. And often, parents aren't even aware.

The parents' role

Ironically, many parents who worry about their children's screen time are themselves guilty of excessive phone use. A mother might scroll through social media while her baby plays nearby, or a father might check emails during dinner. Children learn by observing adults — if they see their parents glued to screens, they internalise that behaviour.

It's common to hear children say, "You're always on your phone." They're right. We cannot expect our children to disconnect if we are constantly connected.

The "educational" myth

Many parents justify screen time with the belief that their children are watching educational content. While some apps are beneficial, not all "educational" content is helpful. Many apps are designed with flashing lights, quick transitions, and addictive loops, which may hold a child's attention but don't necessarily foster deep learning.

Research shows that children who use smartphones frequently may develop faster but shallower thinking. They learn to process information quickly but inaccurately, moving from one stimulus to the next without deep engagement. Parents may be impressed by how quickly their children navigate apps, but speed doesn't always mean comprehension. What may seem like learning is actually just a child clicking through content without absorbing the material.

More concerning is the impact on emotional and social development. Excessive screen time is linked to emotional dysregulation and impaired social skills. Real development happens through face-to-face interactions, imaginative play, and storytelling — not virtual interactions. Apps, while interactive, cannot replace real-world experiences that nurture empathy, patience, and creativity.

Cognitive & physical effects

The overuse of smartphones also disrupts cognitive processes. Digital multitasking, encouraged by apps, trains children's brains to jump quickly from one stimulus to another, reducing their ability to focus and retain information. Many parents overlook the effects of prolonged digital multitasking, which can lead to fragmented attention and shallow learning.

Physically, smartphone overuse has been linked to poor posture and issues like temporomandibular joint pain. Psychologically, studies show connections to rising rates of ADHD, anxiety, and depression among young users. These symptoms, often dismissed as childhood mood swings, may actually be signs of digital overstimulation.

Even apps designed for learning can have negative effects. Research shows that excessive use of these apps can reduce cognitive performance, as they prioritise engagement over comprehension. In contrast, traditional activities like colouring or nature exploration promote better brain development and teach patience, creativity, and resilience — qualities no app can replicate.

Uncertainty of long-term effects

The long-term impact of smartphone use on child cognition remains unclear, but short-term research already highlights concerning trends. We may not fully understand the risks, but do we want to gamble with our children's development in a global, unregulated experiment? What many parents don't realise is that smartphones are deeply shaping their children's worldview and habits. In many households, screens replace attention, discipline, and play.

Children under five often have unrestricted access to smartphones, with no time limits, supervision, or discussions about content. Smartphones are also used as rewards for good behaviour — "Finish your food, and you can watch cartoons." This reinforces the idea that entertainment is a prize for compliance, deepening digital dependency.

How to course correct

Start by setting clear, age-appropriate screen time limits. For children under two, screens should be avoided altogether. For children ages 3–5, limit screen time to no more than one hour per day. Replace screen time with meaningful activities like reading together, nature walks, or creative play. Use parental controls to limit access to apps and co-view content to make screen time a shared experience.

Practice digital minimalism at home. Put phones away during meals, bedtime, and playtime to show children that being present matters more than being online. Most importantly, lead by example. Children learn from what they see, so if your phone is always in your hand, it's natural for them to mirror that behaviour.

Mindful parenting requires reclaiming intentional, quality time with your children. By doing so, you don't just protect childhood; you empower it.

(The author is a research scholar at BIT, Mesra, Ranchi.)

Impact on brain development

- **Excessive screen time** before age 5 can hinder language development and delay cognitive milestones. Studies show that brain development thrives through interaction, not screen exposure.
- **Instant gratification** & delayed frustration tolerance
- **Smartphone use** as a reward creates a pattern of seeking instant gratification, reducing children's ability to handle frustration. Research indicates this impacts emotional regulation and the development of social skills.

The myth of "educational" content

- **"Educational" apps** often feature flashing lights and fast transitions, which may capture attention but do not foster meaningful learning. Studies reveal that these apps promote shallow thinking rather than deep comprehension.

Emotional & social impact

- **Excessive screen time** is linked to emotional dysregulation, impaired social skills, and reduced empathy. Reviews highlight these concerns in children with prolonged screen exposure.

Cognitive decline & attention issues

- **Digital multitasking,** encouraged by smartphones, reduces attention span and leads to shallow learning. Systematic reviews show that constant switching between tasks damages focus and memory.

Physical effects of overuse

- **Prolonged smartphone use** is linked to poor posture, TMJ issues, and rising cases of ADHD, anxiety, and depression in children. Observational studies support these physical and psychological connections.

Screen time as a behavioural reward

- **Giving phones as rewards** reinforces digital dependency early, making it difficult to reverse as the child grows. Research reveals this practice strengthens the link between entertainment and compliance.

Fire Devil mask.

'Ginidella Raksha' mask.

ON THE PALETTE

Masked appeal

Mask making in Sri Lanka is no mere art form. From myth and medicine to satire and spirituality, each hand-carved face carries centuries of cultural and religious significance, writes Raul Dias

Staring at me from a deep, dark corner of the room, his bulbous, fire-filled eyes almost seared their way through my soul. His bared teeth frozen in a deadly grimace, cobras flaring from his crown as if ready to strike. It was only after my pulse steadied that I realised this terrifying profile was not a man at all, but a mask...

To be more specific, this was Ravana, the demon king from the Ramayana. Immortalised in Sri Lankan lore and carved into a fearsome Raksha mask. Found at a dusty old curio shop in Ambalangoda, the Emerald Isle's southern town famed for mask-making, it was my first encounter with a tradition that is both artistic and spiritual. Raksha masks, grotesque yet compelling, are believed to ward off evil. Their exaggerated features, replete with bulging eyes, gaping mouths, serpent hoods, evoke the many-headed Raksha clan that once served Ravana. Among them, the Naga Raksha, adorned with cobras, is perhaps the most iconic, its fierce visage standing as protector rather than destroyer.

Just a short walk away, I found myself inside the Ariyapala Mask Museum, a place where Sri Lanka's mask heritage is meticulously preserved. Rows of glass cabinets displayed everything from vividly painted Kolam masks to the terrifying Sanni masks. Informative panels narrated their history, showing how masks animate folk plays, heal the sick, and guard communities. Upstairs, in a small workshop, artisans chiselled and painted the wooden masks, keeping alive techniques passed down through generations. The museum wasn't simply a display; it was a cultural archive, a conduit between past and present.

It was here, among the museum's collection, that I first encountered the playful Kolam masks. Boldly painted in reds, yellows, and blacks, they seemed to brim with mischief. A curator explained that Kolam masks once lit up village squares in evening dramas, where actors performed satirical skits about kings, queens, tricksters, and drunkards.

'Maura Raksha' mask.

The peacock mask is traditionally used in festivals and dances.

'Naga Raksha' mask.

An artisan paints a fire devil mask in Colombo.

Standing before the Raksha Queen Kolam mask, with her arching brows and sly smile, I could almost hear villagers roaring with laughter under oil lamps. These masks proved that the tradition is as much about amusement as it is about reverence.

Motifs and divine links

Masks also have the power to heal, I was told. The aforementioned Sanni masks form the heart of ritual exorcisms known as Sanni Yakuma. Each of the 18 represents a specific malady. Be it insanity, blindness, or snakebite, and fever. Even phlegm! Grotesque features with their swollen throats, contorted jaws, hollow eyes, were designed to terrify the demons believed to cause illness. Watching the mask of Amukku Sanniya, its throat bulging in an eternal gag, I realised these performances were more than superstition. They brought psychological relief and collective catharsis, binding entire villages in shared belief.

In the hill country near Kandy, I encountered another motif: the peacock, vehicle of the war god Kataragama. Revered as a divine protector, it has elegant feathers that adorn certain masks. In a tiny workshop, I watched an elderly craftsman paint delicate plumes across a Kolam mask. "It is an offering, not just a trade," he told me, his brush moving with devotional steadiness.

The history of these masks is also a history of wood. Carved from the soft, light kaduru tree (or *Pagiantha dichotoma*, a native Sri Lankan tree which bears poisonous fruits), they are shaped with chisels and then painted in luminous reds, blues, and golds. In roadside workshops, I watched blocks of wood transform — eyes carved deeper, lips curled tighter — until mythic personalities emerged, as if the spirits themselves inhabited the grain.

A wall of stories

By the time I left Sri Lanka, I had amassed a small collection, not mere trinkets, but tangible stories. A peacock mask now joins my patio wall display, sitting proudly alongside vibrant faces from Russia, Bali, Tanzania, and Mexico. To guests, it might appear exotic décor, but to me, this Sri Lankan mask embodies protection, storytelling, and resilience.

Travelling across the island, I came to see these masks as more than relics. They are living art, still danced, still carved, still revered. They bridge mythology and medicine, laughter and healing, spirituality and satire. Each one is, quite literally, a face of Sri Lanka. And through them, I glimpsed the enduring soul of the island itself.

MELODY MAKERS

Freedom over formula for Chennai band

The Jatayu Band, known for their jazz-Karnatik improvisations, are performing at the Jodhpur RIFF for the first time, and the synergy couldn't be better, writes Archana Khare Ghose

Members of the Jatayu Band.

Jatayu is a mythical vulture, a demigod from the Ramayana, who plays a vital role in the story as he fights Ravana soon after the latter abducts Sita, setting in motion the chain of events that make Ramayana what it is.

But that's not the reason why Shylu Ravindran gave his Chennai-based band its striking and intriguing name. To my query filled with excitement about a possibly quirky story behind that nomenclature, band leader and guitarist Sahib Singh gives a rather tepid response. He says, "Shylu [Ravindran] coined this name for what was a bedroom project. There was no intention of making any statement with the name. It has nothing to do with religion, and I don't like just making up some meaning."

This response, far off the tangent from what could be generally expected, in capsule, sums up the band itself. To not expect the usual, or to expect the unusual, is what Jatayu is all about. The band explains its work as redefining contemporary Indian fusion, blending the improvisational spirit of jazz with the raw energy of rock and the soul of Karnatik music.

That is a lot of different energies coming together to create a seamless music experience that has helped Jatayu carve a niche for itself in the dynamic indie music scene of the country. Besides Singh (33), the band comprises Kashyap Jaishankar (32) on bass; Shylu Ravindran (34) on guitars, kanjira and mridangam; and Manu Krishnan (36) on drums and vocals.

Currently, it is all set to play at the ongoing Jodhpur RIFF (Rajasthan International Folk Festival), India's premier international roots music festival, which is being held in Jodhpur this week. This edition will be the 18th for the festival, which is held annually to coincide with Sharad Purnima, the brightest full moon of the year, which falls this year on October 6.

This is the first time that Jatayu will be performing at Jodhpur RIFF, and the confluence couldn't be better, as both the band and the festival have independently steered clear of all such mainstream and conventional influences that often end up containing or pigeon-holing creativity.

The festival, held at Mehrangarh Fort in Jodhpur, counts Maharaja Gaj Singh II of Marwar-Jodhpur as its chief patron and Sir Mick Jagger, frontman of the rock band The Rolling Stones, as its international patron.

At this time's edition, as many as 290 artistes are performing, featuring those from Rajasthan, Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu in India, and from 12 other countries such as England, Bhutan, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Switzerland, Portugal, Réunion Islands, Poland, Finland, Colombia, Canada and Italy.

It is this uniqueness of Jodhpur RIFF that Singh says keeps bands like Jatayu alive, without the compulsion to compromise on their core competence. He shares, "We try to create great music and try to remain as true to our ethos as possible. But the kind of work we do — bringing together jazz, rock and Karnatik music — is not mainstream. In fact, we were rejected by many, including the Karnatik music community, but as the manager of the band, it's one of my duties to find an audience. And that's when we discovered that irrespective of all rejections, there is always somebody wanting to listen to our kind of music."

He adds hurriedly that Jatayu's music should not be labelled 'fusion' as it is "an over-used term, even hated by musicians, because the word has lost its meaning."

He says, "Actually, all music today is fusion because some sort of a 'khichdi' is prepared by mixing different styles of music, without giving any clear taste of anything."

The band counts the 'Shakti' band (founded by English guitarist John McLaughlin and Indian violinist L Shankar with percussionists Zakir Hussain and Vikku Vinayakram) as its biggest inspiration, and Singh says the band members had the honour of watching it live in Chennai.

Before winding up, I can't help but ask the inevitable question about working in films. "Of course, it's tempting to make money by making music for films, as the Indian film industry, after all, is massive, but films have a fixed template and sounds have to feel a certain way, because crores are at stake. But Jatayu would rather choose freedom over the rat race," says Singh, sharing that the band has received offers that have been turned down.

ROOTING FOR NATURE

Twisted family dynamics of an arachnid scribe

In a macabre ritual, the female writing spider snacks on the male after mating, and in some species, the males willingly offer themselves up as prey, discovers Ramya Coushik

A mysterious predator prowls around Navilu Kaadu. The ruthless hunter lays an intricate trap to snare prey. The creature cannibalises even its own kind and marks its presence with distinct zigzag patterns on its silken abode — the signature spider, also known as the writing spider (*Argiope anasuja*).

We often see signature spiders on the front porch of our cottage. They scrawl bold autographs above our main door, mooring their web between the security camera and the metal tube supporting the alamanda vine, or across the scaffolding holding up the awning, and even amid foliage around the farm.

The genus Argiope consists of several species of signature spiders, falling under the family Araneidae, a group that comprises orb-weaving spiders that spin radial webs. These spiders get their names from the designer webs that the females weave for themselves, with bold zigzag patterns called stebilimenta that resemble signature flourishes. The spiders weave up to four stebilimenta on their spiral webs.

The female stations herself upside down with her pentagon-shaped abdomen positioned at the centre of the web, and her long and sturdy limbs resting in pairs, marking an X on the web while she awaits her meal to entangle itself in her trap.

The spider's patterned web appears to serve more purposes than one. It could be a warning to hungry predators to keep off a signature spider diet, or a way to prevent birds from flying through the web. The stebilimenta could also be reflecting ultraviolet light to lure insects for the hungry spider to feed on. Signature spiders can devour prey larger than their own body size.

Like most spider species, signature spiders display sexual dimorphism — scientific parlance for anatomical or bodily differences between genders. The gents are tiny and mostly unmarked. They are a little more than a quarter the size of the ladies who span 8 to 12 mm or more. The females wear vivid yellow, rust, black or white bands on their abdomens.

Male signature spiders weave companion webs alongside the female's web. In a macabre mating ritual, the female snacks on the pint-sized male after mating. Scientists theorise that the female derives nutrition from eating her mate to better her chances of birthing sturdy progeny. It could also be that the much larger female spider's predatory instincts are triggered by the vibration of the web when the diminutive male approaches her.

In some species of spiders, the males willingly offer themselves up as prey during mating, in an ultimate sacrifice to sire healthy offspring. Nimble-footed males in certain spider species scurry to safety soon after mating, to escape their lady love's fatal bite.

Once mated, the female lays eggs on the companion web and bundles them all up in a cosy egg sac. A single egg sac can contain up to 1400 eggs. After hatching, the spiderlings remain within the egg sac until spring. The young spiders inherit the mum's cannibalistic instincts, and the siblings proceed to prey on each other within the egg sac until they finally break out of the sac. Speak of twisted family dynamics!

Signature spiders or writing spiders are so called because of the characteristic patterns on their webs.

Signature spiders have bizarre mating rituals.

On emerging, the spiderlings position themselves on lofty perches, hoist their backsides in the air, and release a cloud of gossamer threads. These downy strings are protein fibres secreted in specialised glands called spinnerets in their abdomens.

The spiderlings swing from their perch to ride Earth's invisible electric field, in a behaviour known as ballooning. The merry little spiderlings are known to journey between a couple of metres to hundreds of kilometres on their silken balloons.

As the spiderlings develop and gain in size, they moult a bunch of times, shedding their old exoskeletons until they reach adulthood, which could range between a few weeks to a few months, depending on the species.

If you are an arachnophobe like my older teen, rest assured that the signature spider is harmless to humans. They may bite if threatened, but the bite isn't unlike a bee sting, other than for those with venom allergies.

A habitat that hosts signature spiders signifies a balanced ecosystem with a healthy insect population for the spiders to prey on. The next time you are in a park or in your garden, look around, and you may spot a signature spider stationed on its autographed web.

Rooting For Nature *is a monthly column on an off-kilter urban family's trysts with nature on a natural farm. The author runs Green Goobé, a sustainable venture committed to a greener, cleaner planet. Reach her at bluejaydiaries@gmail.com or @ramyacoushik on Instagram.*

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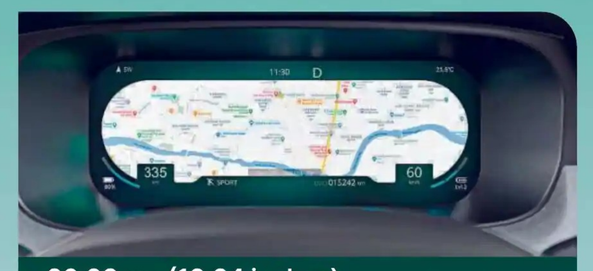
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